THE CHILLICOTHE PRESBYTERY IN OHIO'S ANTI-SLAVERY
MOVEMENT IN THE 1820'S AND 1830'S

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by

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PREFACE

The anti-slavery movement in the United States, like most movements from an historical perspective, has no exact beginning or ending. Except for isolated individual opposition, the eighteenth century heard little in the way of emancipationist agitation. But in the nineteenth century more serious opposition began to be aroused by such men as Benjamin Lundy, James Birney, Charles Crosby, George Bourne, and John Rankin. And it was not until the middle of the second decade of the 1800's that these early reformers earnestly began their writing and agitating.

In Ohio, a frontier state at this time, abolitionism understandably got off to a late start due to the scarcity of people. But by the 1820's the young state had active groups of abolitionists in a number of counties. One of these groups, the Presbyterians in the southwestern part of Ohio centered around Chillicothe, became, in the 1820's and 1830's, one of the foremost emancipationist organizations in the West.

The terminating date of any historical investigation is always to some extent arbitrary. This study is no exception. For the purposes of this paper, however, historical events have provided a convenient cutting-off
point. In 1838 the national Presbyterian church was split into two opposing bodies largely though not exclusively, over the slavery question. This split affected the churches of the Chillicothe Presbytery as well. Some went with the New School organization; others remained loyal to the original body, which became known as the Old School. In fairness to both sides it must be noted that no matter what side the Chillicothe churches picked in the dispute they generally continued their anti-slavery agitation in much the same manner as they had before the split. In order to study the Presbytery as a unit, therefore, this paper will deal with the body's activities only up to the schism which occurred in the late 1830's.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On October 18, 1821 at a meeting of the Presbyterian Synod of Ohio a resolution was passed: "That the counties of Ross, Fayette, Highland, Pike, Adams, Brown and the eastern parts of Clermont and Clinton, shall constitute a Presbytery called the Presbytery of Chillicothe." While this action merely gave a formal name to an already existing group of churches, it also marked, more or less, the beginning of an intense anti-slavery movement within the Presbytery. Indeed, the 1820's and '30's would see the Chillicothe Presbytery become one of the most outspoken abolitionist groups in the Western states.

Less than six months later, on April 3, 1822, the Rev. John Rankin was received into the Chillicothe Presbytery as minister of the Ripley, Ohio church. Simply by itself this event would have eventually made Southwestern Ohio Presbyterians notable in the anti-slavery movement; for John Rankin stands with such well-known abolitionists as

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2 Ibid., p. 92.
Garrison, Weld, and Birney in the history of the fight for Black emancipation. The Chillicothe Presbytery's anti-slavery reputation does not, however, rest solely upon the efforts of Rankin, notable as they may be. Almost to a man the ministers of the churches lying within the Presbytery's bounds were leaders, at least locally—some nationally—in the struggle to end slavery: Dyer Burgess, Samuel Crothers, Hugh Fullerton, James Gilliland, J. B. Mahan, and others—names that have generally been neglected in recounting the role of Ohio in the anti-slavery crusade. The fact that they have been historically overlooked does not, however, diminish their contribution. Together they made the Chillicothe Presbytery one of the most active and tireless religious bodies in the American struggle against slavery.

The Chillicothe Presbytery owes much of its anti-slavery character to events that long preceded the 1821 resolution that established its boundaries. The opening of the Virginia Military District for settlement in 1784 and, more importantly, the passage of the Ordinance of 1787 offered up virgin acres of the fertile Ohio Valley almost for the taking. In the early 1800's it was America's frontier in the North. But it was a frontier that did not welcome the slaveholder. The 1787 ordinance had answered that question before it was even asked. The north bank of the Ohio was to be free.
And it was to this north bank of the Ohio that many settlers came, especially those from the South seeking relief from the institution of slavery. The early years of the nineteenth century, primarily following the War of 1812, saw thousands of these settlers come into Ohio, the closest and most convenient free state to the South.

As the Black Belt developed and slavery and the power of slaveholders began to dominate the lower South, the liberals moved out. They went to the free states. They became the most outspoken critics of slavery, and knew whereof they spoke. . . . They were exiles in a very real sense, for some of them, certainly, would have been killed had they ventured back to the South. . . . These were men and women who simply refused to live in the atmosphere of slavery. . . . The rapid rise of slave power bore them down and drove them out.³

To the Chillicothe Presbytery this northward migration brought a core of liberal, activist clergymen who were to take a leading role in the anti-slavery movement in southern Ohio.

Before an explanation of the role of the Presbyterian Church in the Ohio anti-slavery struggle can be attempted it is essential that the role of the church in general, whether Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist, be understood. The church in frontier American society in the early 1800's was a far different institution than the church of today,

or even of a hundred years ago. Society was simple; life was a daily battle to survive. And the church played a central role for many people in this frontier society. Of course, it is certainly not true that the people of this time and place were in any way imbued with more religious feeling or insight than people of any other time or place; it is true, however, that the institutional church played a much different role in the social structure of early nineteenth century Ohio than it does today.

Southern Ohio in the 1820's and 1830's was a predominateley rural area with scattered villages serving an agricultural economy. The villages were for the most part "island communities," which carried on social intercourse in essentially isolated patterns. The social and economic life of one town, and the surrounding rural area it served, went on with little contact with neighboring villages. There was almost no need for outside contacts in everyday life since most of the villages offered primarily the same necessities--supplies, medical aid, and churches. Moreover, the difficulty of transportation made it almost impossible for a rural family to attend to their needs, whether physical or spiritual, in any but the nearest village or crossroads.

In a society such as this the church was about the only institution that dealt with things beyond the economic struggle for survival. The church served not only as a spiritual center, but as a social, educational, and intellectual center as well. The church was the place where people came together to momentarily forget about the often brutal work of raising a family and running a frontier farm. Not only in Ohio, but "Throughout the country the churches were more than religious organizations: they were ganglia of social life and intellectual influence, strengthened by fifty years of organization."\(^5\) Indeed, the local church had a significance that is for the most part lost to present day Americans. The church served as the center of life and culture outside the home. If there were any schools in the early settlements they were most likely connected to a church. The local pastors were frequently the best formally educated men of the community. Moreover, as the churches were often the only public buildings large enough to hold gatherings, they were used for social functions aside from worship services.

Increasing the influence of the church in Ohio during this period was a sudden growth spurt that occurred around the turn of the century. This increase in membership was

due in part simply to the influx of settlers. But accompanying the population increase there was also a widespread series of revivals during the depression years after the peace of 1816 that helped swell the churches' membership rolls. The Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian denominations profited more than any others, with the areas of most rapid growth being in western New York and Ohio. And while figures to prove the assumption are not available, it must be presumed that the Chillicothe Presbyterian churches benefited from the increased enrollment as well.

In dealing with the influence of one specific religious denomination in a certain time span the historian is, of course, faced with some unanswerable questions and unmeasurable quantities. It is, for example, impossible to measure quantitatively such a thing as influence or significance, words often thrown about rather loosely by historians. How is one to measure the achievements of the Chillicothe Presbytery in the anti-slavery movement as compared with the Baptists or Methodists or Quakers, for instance? To simply count the number of resolutions passed or actions taken by a denomination in a geographical area tells nothing of how far those actions went toward abolishing

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slavery. To simply tell of the ministers in each denomination and their personal actions in the fight against slavery does not prove one denomination more abolitionist than another. In the first place, can one assume that a minister, who was also an abolitionist, became active in the anti-slavery crusade because of his religious or denominational ties? Or was his opposition to slavery independent of his religious calling? Obviously those questions are beyond the historian's competence. Nor would it be especially enlightening or significant from an historical standpoint to prove one denomination more prone toward abolitionism than another.

That is not the purpose of this paper. Rather it is hoped that this historical investigation will add to the store of knowledge about the anti-slavery movement already accumulated. How, in other words, did the ministers and members of the Chillicothe Presbytery add to the emancipation movement? By studying this group of anti-slavery advocates, who also happen to be Presbyterians, it is additionally hoped that an understanding of the abolitionists' role in the history of this nation's development can, in some small way, be furthered. That they were all members of the Chillicothe Presbytery is a convenient organizing tool for the writer. But the actions they took were the actions of individual men working, sometimes collectively through the vehicle of their church and sometimes as lone
activists protesting what they viewed as a national disgrace and sin, toward the abolition of slavery in America.

In the area encompassed by the Chillicothe Presbytery, that denomination was third in numbers behind the Baptists and Methodists. And although the attempt to rank the various denominations is not a goal herein aspired to, mention should be made of the relative influence of the Presbyterian church in southwestern Ohio as compared to the other major churches. Simply by virtue of their size the Presbyterians can certainly not be considered insignificant. In fact, religious historian T. L. Smith states that "despite their fewer numbers Presbyterians exerted a greater influence" on social questions than either of the other two denominations.\(^7\) Nationally as well, the Presbyterian Church must be considered one of the most influential religious organizations of the day. Alice Dana Adams states that the Presbyterian General Assembly at this time was "the most powerful ecclesiastical body in America."\(^8\) In any event, it is enough to say that the Presbyterians formed a major religious institution which exerted at least as much influence upon society as the other major denominations of the time.


But more specifically, regarding the early anti-slavery movement, how significant was the Chillicothe Presbytery? Here again accurate comparisons are impossible and unnecessary. The ministers and many of the members of the Chillicothe Presbytery were, in fact, extremely active in the anti-slavery movement from very early in its history.

It is to be doubted whether any other presbytery, or indeed any other ecclesiastical body, unless it be the Friends or Mennonites, was more consistent or more persistent in its opposition to the national inequity of African slavery. 9

It was the preaching and writing of such men as Rankin, Gilliland, Dickey, Burgess, and Crothers, who knew slavery from personal contact, which laid the foundation for the Abolitionist movement in southern Ohio. 10

And there were many others besides those mentioned above, who in various ways aided the fight against slavery. Some were well known speakers or writers; others were obscure, or unknown conductors on the "Underground Railroad." But in one form or another there were a great many Presbyterians in these southern Ohio counties who collectively gave the Chillicothe Presbytery a substantial anti-slavery character and reputation.


The origin of many of the ministers and laymen of the Chillicothe Presbytery lay in the South. As previously mentioned, a substantial number moved to Ohio primarily to escape the slaveholding system. Rankin at Ripley, Gilliland at Red Oak, Lockhart at Russellville, Dobbins at Sardinia, Crothers at Greenfield, (all in Brown County), James and William Dickey in Ross and Fayette Counties—all had been born or raised in slaveholding states and had found the system odious. Their removal to the same general area within Ohio was bound to produce some sort of anti-slavery activity; for they "... had lived in the South and knew the evils of slavery at first hand."\(^{11}\)

Escape, however, was by itself not the answer for most of them. Individual abolitionist acts plus collective actions through the Presbytery accompanied their migration to and settlement in the North. As D. L. Dumond puts it,

\[\text{John}\] Rankin joined with James H. Dickey and James Gilliland of South Carolina, Samuel Crothers of Kentucky, and Dyer Burgess in making the Chillicothe Presbytery strongly anti-slavery and a tower of strength to Theodore Weld and James G. Birney in the thirties.\(^{12}\)

Nor do these five complete the list. There were others just as active, such as William Dickey (half brother to

\(^{11}\)Ibid., p. 134.

James), Hugh S. Fullerton, John P. Van Dyke, and J. B. Mahan, to name a few.
CHAPTER II

JOHN RANKIN

The histories of this period have deemed one man as pre-eminent among Chillicothe abolitionists. He holds, in fact, a high place in most accounts of the fight against slavery in this country, on a national as well as a local level. This man is John Rankin of Ripley, Ohio. From very early in his life right up to the Civil War Rankin fought incessantly against the system he viewed as immoral and inexcusable. Acting from a religious upbringing and education, but not always as a clergyman, Rankin summarized his life-long battle in his own words:

I have set abolitionism as the highest interest, and have endeavored to ascertain what will, upon the whole, promote it . . . . The principle I act on is that as a citizen I am bound to prevent evil. If I cannot prevent it all, I must prevent as much of it as I can.\(^\text{13}\)

Written in 1840, in the middle of his anti-slavery career to an abolitionist colleague, these words, perhaps under-stating his contribution, nevertheless reveal the man's own commitment to do as much as was individually possible to

\(^{13}\text{The Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas (Dayton, 1909), pp. 18-19. Hereafter cited as Thomas, Correspondence.}\)
eradicate a system that he saw as a violation of the laws of God and Nature.

John Rankin, the son of Richard Rankin, a Revolutionary War veteran, and Isabella Rankin, was born on February 4, 1793 near the town of Dandridge in Jefferson County, Tennessee. His Scotch-Irish parents had moved there from Pennsylvania in 1784, when Tennessee was America's western-most frontier. John stayed with his family on their farm until he was 20, picking up what little formal education was available in that remote country. He sporadically attended a district school only two miles from his home, but his formal schooling was only intermittent and altogether short in duration. What he lacked in formal schooling, however, he made up for at home. After learning the rudiments of reading and writing from his parents, Rankin studied the Bible in his spare time, committing parts of it to memory. His course of self-improvement also included the writing of essays and practice in speaking. According to his early biographers, young Rankin had a keen desire to improve his oratorical skills. 14

The second stage of his education was actually the period during which his anti-slavery views became molded.

and systematized. Rankin had been raised in an anti-slavery atmosphere at home. In fact, "He had been brought up practically from his cradle as a Rechabite in temperance and as an abolitionist."\textsuperscript{15} But it was at Washington College in Jonesborough, Tennessee that John Rankin was introduced to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Doak, his teacher and eventually his grandfather-in-law.\textsuperscript{16} This pupil-teacher relationship would serve to confirm Rankin's already existent hatred of slavery and desire to end it, and in the other direction, the student's \textit{immediatism}--the belief that slavery must be ended at once--rubbed off on the teacher.

Samuel Doak, his mentor, had emigrated from Virginia to Jonesborough in East Tennessee in 1780. He was, in fact, according to his great grandson, the first preacher of any denomination who preached in the southwest territory. There he organized a Presbyterian church and founded Washington College, of which he was the president for forty years. Dr. Doak was an opponent of slavery even at this early date, and he emancipated his slaves in accordance with his beliefs. It was in this territory, moreover, that Crosby and Lundy were publishing their anti-slavery newspaper, \textit{The Genius of Universal Emancipation}, "and had it not

\textsuperscript{15}Grim, \textit{Rankin}, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 5.
been for the thorough training the people of that section
had received from Dr. Doak on the subject of Slavery, they
could not have issued a second number of their paper."\textsuperscript{17}

During his final year as a student at Washington
College John Rankin married Miss Jean Lowry, granddaughter
of the Rev. Dr. Doak. The marriage occurred prior to his
graduation partly due to financial difficulties. By marry-
ing when he did, Rankin was able to depend on his wife's
support to finish school rather than his father's, who was
far from a rich man. The marriage was happy and productive--
nine sons and four daughters--and long in duration as well.
They were married sixty-five years. Mrs. Rankin died in
Kansas in 1878 at the age of 84.\textsuperscript{18}

Upon graduation from Washington College in 1814,
Rankin continued his theological studies under Doak. He
was finally licensed to preach in 1816, and for the next
year the young preacher "supplied" at the Presbyterian
churches in the area. "He was a popular minister; he and
his wife became the leaders of church and educational work
of the community."\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{17}R. C. Rankin, "Neither Charles Crosby Nor William
Lloyd Garrison Were The First To Proclaim Immediate Emanci-
pation," Ripley Bee and Times (January 30, 1884), p. 3.
Hereafter cited as Rankin, "First to Proclaim."

\textsuperscript{18}Carl N. Thompson, ed. Historical Collections of
as Thompson, Brown County.

\textsuperscript{19}Grim, Rankin, p. 7.
It was also during his years of education under Dr. Doak that Rankin began his public fight against slavery. As early as 1814, Rankin's senior year, Jefferson County had an abolition society. Rankin joined the society as a student, although the extent to which he participated in the society's work is unknown. His studies at the college undoubtedly forced him to spend less time on the abolition work than he would have preferred, but it was the beginning of his association with a number of abolition societies, some of which he was to found.

In fact, before Rankin ever left Tennessee, he was involved in the formation of an emancipation society. In company with another notable Southern abolitionist, Charles Osborne, Rankin, still a theological student under Doak, helped organize the Manumission Society of Tennessee.\(^{21}\)

The atmosphere in East Tennessee was, nevertheless, polluted by the slaveholding system. Rankin fearing the principles of slavery would corrupt his children, decided his family should be moved to the freer air of Ohio.

"Imbued with the love of liberty, and hating in his soul the system of African slavery, Mr. Rankin determined to remove


\(^{21}\)Dumond, Antislavery, p. 95.
from its contaminating and enervating influences."²² Nowhere in his correspondence or writings does he, or anyone else for that matter, ever consider this decision as mere escapism. Many people moved north to escape the system. Rankin apparently felt he could fight as well from above the border as from below it. Accordingly, in 1817 he loaded his wife and family along with all their possessions into a wagon to begin the long and dangerous journey through Kentucky to the north bank of the Ohio.

Unforeseen to Rankin at the time, however, the arrival in Ohio was to be delayed for about four years. Travel was both difficult and dangerous in that part of the country during the early years of the nineteenth century. Being in Kentucky as winter was approaching, Rankin was invited and accepted the request of the Concord, Kentucky Presbyterian Church to serve as their pastor over the winter. But the spring found Rankin and the congregation attached to one another, and the young preacher was destined to remain there four years, serving the Presbyterians in the Concord and Cane Ridge churches of Nicholas and Bourbon counties.²³


²³Grim, Rankin, p. 9; Howe, Historical Collections, I, p. 338.
It was while preaching in Kentucky that the real beginnings of Rankin's anti-slavery career were to take root. This section of Kentucky at that time was tolerant to anti-slavery views. According to one early biographer of Rankin, Andrew Ritchie (1868), the area contained a majority of people holding anti-slavery attitudes. But the accuracy of that quantitative term aside, Rankin was free to preach against the institution without harassment; and he did.

I preached against slavery in some of the most prominent parts of the state, and was known as an abolitionist as far as I was known, and I spoke against slavery in families of wealthy slaveholders, and I never had an insult offered.  

John Rankin's fame early in his career came primarily from his reputation as an anti-slavery publicist. Again Kentucky was the place where his first real efforts in that direction took place. Not only did he write several articles against slavery, but he, along with other leaders of the movement, founded the Abolition Intelligencer and Missionary Magazine in October of 1821. The publication was to act as an organ for furthering the aims of the abolition cause.

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24 Ritchie, Soldier, p. 22.

25 John Rankin, A Short Memoir of Samuel Donnelly, p. 20, quoted in Grim, Rankin, p. 10.

26 Grim, Rankin, p. 10.
Rankin's abundant talent as an organizer was similarly cultivated during his four-year stay in Kentucky. Besides organizing an anti-slavery society in Carlisle, Kentucky in 1828, he was instrumental in the establishment of several societies auxiliary to the Kentucky Abolition Society, which had begun in 1807. This was the same state society for which Rankin worked in helping to organize the Abolition Intelligencer and Missionary Magazine. 27 Although Rankin most likely had no perception of his stay in Kentucky as a period of training for the later work in Ohio, an investigation into his life suggests that it should be so interpreted. When he arrived in Ohio, not yet thirty years old, he already was an active writer and experienced organizer, who would quickly put his varied skills to work.

Rankin's move to Ohio, as originally intended, was resumed in 1822. The stay in Kentucky had not been distasteful or especially unproductive for him, but with the passage of the Missouri Compromise in 1820, Kentucky began to grow increasingly pro-slavery. In addition, the Rankins had three children born in Kentucky, four altogether, and they refused to raise them in an atmosphere that favored, or even tolerated, slavery. So, "out of opposition to slavery," they traveled northward in the spring of 1822, arriving in Ripley, Ohio in May. 28

27 Ibid.
Ripley was a wild frontier river town in 1822, and much of Rankin's early work was taken up in increasing church membership and in temperance work, a crusade to which he also dedicated much time. But in December of 1823, a letter from his brother in Virginia proved to be the catalyst which launched Rankin's Ohio activities in the anti-slavery movement. The letter contained the news that his brother, a merchant, had acquired a Negro slave. The reaction, in view of the preacher's beliefs, was not surprising. Rankin wrote a series of letters condemning the act and the entire institution of slavery. The letters were published in The Castigator, a Ripley paper, by the editor, David Ammen, and soon became well known in the area. And in 1826, upon urging from his colleagues, the author revised and added to the letters, which were then published in book form, again by David Ammen but at the expense of Rankin.\(^29\)

It is indeed difficult to speculate on the amount of influence a specific book may have had in any movement, and Rankin's Letters on Slavery is certainly no exception. It was, however, one of the first books on the subject of slavery printed west of the Appalachians, and it was "fairly well received in both Ohio and Kentucky."\(^30\) Albert Bushnell

\(^29\)Ibid., pp. 28-29.

\(^30\)Grim, Rankin, p. 30.
Hart maintains a much stronger point of view; he says the letters became a "sort of text book for abolitionists."\(^{31}\) This view seems to be substantiated by the opinions of two fellow abolitionists of national reputation, William Lloyd Garrison and Samuel J. May, both of whom praised the volume highly. The latter has been quoted as saying, "We New England Abolitionists, in the early days of our warfare, made great use of Mr. Rankin's volume as a depository of attested fact." Indeed, May regarded Rankin as America's first great abolitionist.\(^{32}\)

The book apparently meant even more to Garrison, the best known of all the abolitionists. On the fly-leaf of an autographed copy of the *Writings of Garrison*, presented to Rankin by the author, is an inscription: "Rev. John Rankin, with the profound regards and loving veneration of his anti-slavery disciple and humble co-worker in the cause of emancipation." It is dated Cincinnati, April 20, 1853.\(^{33}\) Elsewhere Garrison has been quoted as calling Rankin's book "among the most faithful and thrilling productions we have

\(^{31}\) Hart, *Slavery*, p. 159.

\(^{32}\) Calvin Rankin, Interview, Ripley, Ohio, January 3, 1932, quoted in Purtee, *Underground Railroad*, p. 53.

used on the subject of slavery."\textsuperscript{34} Moreover, Garrison published the letters in his anti-slavery newspaper, the \textit{Liberator}, in 1832.\textsuperscript{35} Rankin in his autobiography corroborates this view of the role of his writings on Garrison's abolitionism. Speaking of Garrison, Rankin writes: "He acknowledged himself to be my disciple. I am responsible for his Abolitionism but not for his divinity."\textsuperscript{36}

Although \textit{Letters on Slavery} is certainly Rankin's best known and most influential literary effort in the anti-slavery movement, he was active as a publicist in many other ways. In addition to being an "... indefatigable speaker for the anti-slavery cause,"\textsuperscript{37} Rankin was instrumental in forming the American Reform Book and Tract Society (later the Western Book and Tract Society) in the 1850's, whose purpose it was to publish anti-slavery materials. Rankin spent much time and effort on the society to keep it going in face of strong opposition and many difficulties.


\textsuperscript{35}Grim, \textit{Rankin}, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{36}John Rankin, \textit{Life of Rev. John Rankin Written By Himself in His Eightieth Year}, typescript in Ohio Historical Society Library, p. 54. Hereafter cited as Rankin, \textit{Life}.

Andrew Ritchie, writing in the 1860's, said of the organization: "Small and despised, it has nevertheless held on its way until it is now recognized as an institution not only of Cincinnati, but of the West."\(^{38}\) As president of the society for more than twenty years, Rankin did much of the work himself and had many of his own tracts published by it.\(^{39}\)

Paltry little of the writings of Rankin are at hand for the historian, but a small excerpt from his book sheds some light on the way Rankin viewed his own role in the anti-slavery movement. And while this may be supposition, it is most likely the way most of the Chillicothe Presbyterian abolitionists perceived the part they were playing in the movement to free the slaves.

Let all the friends of justice and suffering humanity do what little they can, in their several circles, and according to their various stations, capacities, and opportunities; and all their little streams of exertion will in process of time, flow together, and constitute a mighty river that shall sweep away the yoke of oppression, and purge our nation from the abomination of slavery.\(^{40}\)

It appears from this statement and from the thankless behind-the-scenes work on such projects as the book and

\(^{38}\)Ritchie, Soldier, p. 27.


\(^{40}\)John Rankin, Letters on Slavery (Ripley, 1826), pp. iv, vi, quoted in Grim, Rankin, p. 22.
tract society and the organizing of anti-slavery societies
that Rankin was no egoist out for personal glory as well
as for the freedom of the slaves. On the contrary, the
evidence seems to point to a sincere, religiously and
morally inspired hatred of slavery, which over the years
influenced the many facets of Rankin's career.

The question of exactly when John Rankin began
advocating immediate emancipation is open to some question,
but it certainly dates from before his arrival in Ohio.
He probably began preaching against gradualism in 1815,
during his study with Dr. Doak. The exact date is not
easily determined nor particularly important to this study.
A statement made by Rankin in 1839 does, however, suggest
that his immediatism was a pre-Ohio belief. He said at an
American Anti-Slavery Society meeting in May of that year;
"I rejoice in the triumph of the principles of immediate
emancipation because . . . I was a member of an anti-slavery
society in Kentucky twenty years ago on the same principle
as this." 41

It is sufficient to say that somewhere between
1815 and 1819 Rankin began advocating immediatism.

Rankin's career in Ohio was long and filled with
much activity. The first years, as has been stated, were
taken up mostly in writing the Letters on Slavery and with

41 William Birney, James G. Birney and His Times,
p. 170, quoted in Grim, RANKIN, p. 20.
preaching against the institution of slavery. The most active period in his anti-slavery activities, however, began in the mid-1830's and continued on through to the Civil War. In April of 1835, for example, Rankin was present at the formation of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society, which was largely a result of the work of Theodore Weld. The convention consisted of 110 delegates from 25 counties who met at Zanesville, Ohio. "Among those present were confirmed anti-slavery men such as Rev. John Rankin, of Ripley, Weld, Birney, Crothers, Lane 'rebels' from Oberlin and Cincinnati, and numerous Quakers, as well as newer converts."

This first meeting of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society was attended not only by John Rankin, but also by a number of other members of the Chillicothe Presbytery. In fact, the meeting was called together by Col. William Keys of Highland County; the chairman pro tem was Col. Robert Stewart of Ross County; and the opening prayer was given by Rev. J. H. Dickey, also of Ross County. Later in the convention Stewart was elected president and Keys second vice president. All of these men were laymen or ministers in the Chillicothe Presbytery. Stewart and Keys, along

with many of the others were especially active in Underground Railroad work in their respective counties. But they were not the only Presbyterians present. Three of the six delegates from Brown County were Presbyterians, as were five of the six from Fayette County, three of six from Highland County, four of seven from Ross County, and the lone delegate from Pike County. Of these there were seven Presbyterian ministers besides Rankin: the Rev. J. B. Mahan, Rev. William Dickey, Rev. Samuel Crothers, Rev. G. C. Beaman, Rev. J. H. Dickey, and Rev. Hugh S. Fullerton.\textsuperscript{43} So not only was the Chillicothe Presbytery represented by some of the ablest and best known abolitionists in the West, even the counties making up the Presbytery had a majority of delegates who were also Presbyterians. Such representation points up the importance placed upon anti-slavery principles in the churches of the Chillicothe Presbytery.

The year following this first meeting was a busy one for both the Ohio society and for Rankin. The state society drastically increased its membership from 20 locals in the beginning to 120 after one year, and the statewide enrollment has been estimated at 10,000.\textsuperscript{44} In the counties comprising

\textsuperscript{43}Minutes of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society Convention, Putnam, Ohio, April, 1835, in WHS, Vol. 10.

the Chillicothe Presbytery numerous auxiliary societies were started to help make up the 120. There was one formed in Adams County (West Union), four in Brown County (Felicity, Georgetown, Ripley, and White Oak), and one each in Clermont and Fayette counties. In each case many of the members were Presbyterians. The Ripley Anti-Slavery Society's minutebook, for example, shows that a large number of its members, at least 35, were also members of the congregations of local Presbyterian ministers.  

The year 1836 was a significant one in the career of John Rankin as well. It was in this year that he was granted time off from his ministerial duties by the Presbytery to serve as an anti-slavery agent for the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society. He was appointed agent for a year, but illness forced him to give up after only half that time.  

It was during this six months of lecturing throughout the state that Rankin came to know the anger of a mob. Even before this time Rankin had felt the threat of mob


46 Ripley Anti-Slavery Society Minutebook, 1835-1844 and 1848, Ohio Historical Society Archives, Columbus, Ohio, pp. 4-10. Hereafter cited as Ripley Minutebook.

action. On his way home from the founding convention of 1835, he had stopped to preach before a Black congregation in Chillicothe. The service was interrupted by a group of angry whites, which stoned the preacher. Luckily everyone escaped serious injury.\textsuperscript{48} Again, in 1836, on his way home from his second lecture as an anti-slavery agent, he was ambushed by a man who hit him on the neck with a club. This time Rankin also escaped serious injury.\textsuperscript{49} Still another incident at Decatur, Ohio pitted armed pro-slavery and anti-slavery groups on the occasion of Rankin's lecture. Real trouble fortunately was again averted by "The best class of citizens of that village . . .," who quieted the mob and got them to disperse.\textsuperscript{50} But these examples give an indication of the feelings that were aroused in the breasts of pro-slavery advocates when faced by a crusading abolitionist. According to Andrew Ritchie, an early biographer, Rankin was quoted as saying, "When I commenced my course of lectures against slavery, the spirit of mobocracy was rife in almost every place."\textsuperscript{51} Indeed, before Rankin was through he had faced the mob more than twenty times.\textsuperscript{52}

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\textsuperscript{49}Grim, \textit{Rankin}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{50}Ritchie, \textit{Soldier}, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{51}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 39.
That John Rankin professed immediate emancipation early in his career has been previously established. But he also had a concrete formula for emancipating the slaves. While the scheme was never given anything more than a sneer or a laugh by most people at the time, it shows the thoroughness of Rankin's abolitionist philosophy. He was not merely a preacher denouncing sin from the pulpit and demanding repentance; he also offered a plan, albeit far-fetched, for the accomplishment of the goal he was seeking. The plan called for the government to set aside tracts of public domain for sale (much the same as was later passed in the Morrill Act, which set up land grant colleges) with the proceeds going to compensate the slaveholders who set their slaves free. The price of the slaves would be determined by an impartial commission established for that purpose. Rankin wrote many articles and spoke often in support of his plan, but to no effect. The issue would eventually be settled by a presidential proclamation which carried a much higher price tag than Rankin's plan called for.

A great deal more could be, and has been, written about John Rankin and his anti-slavery activities. He is especially well remembered as an "Underground Railroad" operator in Ripley. Perhaps more has been written about

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53 Ritchie, Soldier, p. 32; Grim, Rankin, p. 19.
this phase of his career than any other. For the purposes of this study, however, let it suffice to say that "John Rankin and his family were perhaps the best known 'railroaders' in Ohio's underground." Since the question of the actual volume of runaways handled by this almost mythologized network of slave harbors is up for debate in the historical community at present, no estimates of those traveling the routes through the counties comprising the Chillicothe Presbytery will be risked. But a number of these routes did exist and were well known to slave-hunters of the day. This aspect of the Chillicothe Presbytery's role in Ohio's early anti-slavery movement will be dealt with later.

As important as John Rankin is to the abolitionist history of the Presbytery in question, he is obviously not the sole reason for its widespread emancipationist character. Nor would the parameters of this paper allow exclusive treatment of his varied career. It has not been the intention here to pretend that Rankin's full story has been told. Rather it has been shown only that he was in large part responsible for the anti-slavery tone of the Presbytery with which he was connected. There were many others who fought as long and as hard and as tirelessly as did Rankin.

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54 Thompson, Brown County, p. 632.
It is unfortunate from an historical point of view that not much material remains concerning on other ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery. And though the amount of Rankin material far surpasses the evidence remaining on any of his colleagues, even that can not be considered voluminous. Nevertheless, it is possible from what paltry sources there are to piece together a view of the Chillicothe Presbytery as one of the country's most active in the struggle to free the slaves. This is especially true in the early years of the movement, before the 1836 schism that tore the Presbyterian Church apart. The Secretary's report of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention in 1836 bears this out: 

"... up to the date of our society, we know of no ecclesiastical body in Ohio, (the Presbytery of Chillicothe excepted) which had borne consistent testimony against slave-holding oppression."\(^{55}\)

CHAPTER III

DYER BURGESS

One of the Presbytery's first abolitionists, who was working within the church on the national scene as early as 1818, was the Reverend Dyer Burgess. Unlike many of his fellow workers in the emancipationist cause, Burgess was not born in the South. This fact, of course, is not an indication that he was any more or less strident in his efforts to rid the country of slavery. He began his life in Springfield, Vermont on December 27, 1784, and it was only 16 years later that he first began preaching. Unfortunately, little is known of his early years in New England, but his first preaching experience at this tender age was as a Methodist. Later he changed denominations, this time choosing the Congregationalist Church. It was in 1816 that he became important to the Ohio movement, because it was then that he joined the Miami Ohio Presbytery as a minister of a Presbyterian congregation. Soon thereafter he became a pastor in the Chillicothe Presbytery at the

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56 Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 145.
West Union church in Adams County and "thus associated with men of anti-slavery prominence." 57

Not long after his arrival in Ohio Burgess became involved in the passage of the anti-slavery resolution for which he is most often remembered. The resolution, offered before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1818, had originated in the Miami Presbytery in 1817, while Burgess was still a member of that body. It was presented before the Ohio Synod in 1817 with no action being taken on it, and in 1818, it found its way to the national level of the Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly. The resolution was framed by Burgess, then representing the Chillicothe Presbytery, Ashbel Green of Princeton, and George Baxter of Virginia, and it remained the strongest statement against the institution of slavery ever passed by the Presbyterian General Assembly down to the Civil War. Not only did he aid in preparing the document, but "The militant Dyer Burgess has been given much of credit for the adoption of that highly controversial deliverance by the General Assembly of 1818." 58

This act of a few militant abolitionists early in the emancipation movement, when pro-slavery anger was not yet

57 Adams, Neglected Period, p. 59.
much aroused by condemnations of the institution, would one
day come to haunt the General Assembly. For it was through
this 1818 resolution, which put the national Presbyterian
body on record as opposing slavery, that the later aboli-
tionists, such as Burgess, Rankin, and the rest of the
Chillicothe group, could base their arguments in favor of
taking stronger actions within the church against slave-
holding. The General Assembly being under the sway of
more conservative forces, who feared splitting the church,
continually fought off attempts at such actions. Their
efforts failed, however, and the intra-church struggle,
begun with this 1818 resolution, ended in 1838 with the
schism that divided the church into two separate organiza-
tions, the Old and the New School.

The wording of the famous resolution can leave no
doubt about the anti-slavery beliefs and intentions of its
authors and advocates. It states:

We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of
the human race by another, as a gross violation of
the most precious and sacred rights of human nature;
as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which
requires us to love our neighbors as ourselves; and
as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and
principles of the Gospel of Christ, which enjoins
that 'all things whatsoever ye would that men should
do to you, do ye even so to them.' . . . and to ob-
tain the complete abolition of slavery throughout
Christendom, and if possible, throughout the world.59

Nor did Burgess and his cohorts at the 1818 meeting face much opposition to their resolution. It received a "large majority" of the vote and passed easily.  

It was only later, especially in the 1830's, that the resolution's real significance was to become apparent to those favoring no action against slaveholding in the church. Had it been presented in these "hot" years its passage would certainly not have been such an easy matter.

The Rev. Mr. Burgess did not limit himself to the church fight exclusively. In his home county of Adams, as well, the minister was well-known as an anti-slavery man. One early resident of the county, who lived there between 1821 and 1851, said of Burgess:

The first original abolitionist in W. Union was Rev. Dyer Burgess . . . . I can remember of hearing of him and I read some of his writings back in 1832-3 . . . . He was known all over the country. He was the organizer of the Abolitionists in Adams Co.  

It is, of course, immaterial whether he was the first abolitionist in the county, but the fact remains he was at least a notable one during the early years of the anti-slavery movement there.

One of the anti-slavery writings authored by Burgess was a pamphlet produced in 1827 (one year after Rankin's

60 Ibid.
61 Oliver Traber, Interview, no date, in WHS, Vol. I.
book] calling for the immediate abolition of slavery. The Chillicothe Presbytery, meeting at Hillsborough in September of that year, thought enough of the effort to sanction the purchase of 100 copies of the work to be distributed to the members for resale, "if practicable," with proceeds going to the Presbytery. 62

Burgess' reputation as an anti-slavery publicist was also enhanced by his stay for a year in Cincinnati, beginning in 1831, where he edited an anti-slavery and anti-masonic publication. 63 Such a position at that time, when anti-slavery and pro-slavery opinion was beginning to clash in the North and the South, undoubtedly made Burgess' name known to many on both sides of the question.

That he was well-known for his anti-slavery views and activities in and around Adams County is evidenced by the near loss of his life occasioned by those beliefs.

His hatred of slavery was intense, and he became so well known as a writer and lecturer against that institution that he has mobbed while on a trip to New Orleans, and only the agonized pleadings of his wife saved him from being hanged. 64

Evidently speaking of the same incident, R. C. Rankin,

63 Welsh, Buckeye, p. 83.
64 Purtee, Underground Railroad, p. 55.
John's son, wrote in 1884: "He was extreme in his denunciations of slavery. I have known him to be put off a steamboat at Ripley, to prevent his being killed by a mob on the boat on account of his Abolitionism." For the recognition of a name to be cause enough for a mob to form leads to the conclusion that Burgess was anything but an obscure anti-slavery minister from southern Ohio.

Nor did Burgess work alone from his pulpit and church in the emancipation cause. He supported and was supported by a strongly anti-slavery congregation. R. C. Rankin, speaking of Burgess and his church members, said:

Not withstanding his unparalleled zeal for the cause of emancipation, and he had some of the most zealous Abolitionists in the bounds of his church, and of wealth and influence, such as the Williamson and Means, above mentioned, there was the large and influential family of ex-Governor Thomas Kirker, who were unconditional and uncompromising Abolitionists, as well as the Ellisons, who were outspoken when it was unpopular to do so.

It should be noted as well that Burgess and many of his congregation, especially the Means family, were active in the Underground Railroad, perhaps as early as 1817.

The anti-slavery career of Dyer Burgess becomes somewhat obscure after around 1840. Galbraith, in his summary of the meetings of the Chillicothe Presbytery, notes that in 1840, Burgess was employed to preach by a church in

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65 Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 3.
66 Ibid.
Warren, Washington County. 67 That would have taken him out of the bounds of the Chillicothe body. However, other sources claim that he was active in the movement in Adams County well after 1840. 68 Whatever the case may be in regards to his post-1840 career, it is sufficient for this study to note that, "Throughout this entire period [1816 to 1838 or 1840] his voice was one of the boldest and clearest in behalf of justice to the Negro." 69

67 Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 145.
68 Purtee, Underground Railroad, p. 55; Nelson W. Evans and Emmons B. Strivers, History of Adams County, Ohio, p. 404, excerpt in WHS.
69 Welsh, Buckeye, p. 83.
CHAPTER IV

SAMUEL CROTHERS

After Rankin, perhaps the best known of the Chilli-cothe abolitionists was Samuel Crotthers. Born near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania in 1782 or 1783, Crotthers was raised in Kentucky following his Scotch-Irish father's decision to move there after the Revolutionary War. He entered Lexington Academy in 1796, where as a student he supported the French Revolution but "changed later."70 Following his studies at the Academy, he united with the Associate Reformed Church of Lexington and in 1804 became a candidate for the ministry. During this period of training he taught at the Academy and elsewhere to support himself. Then, in 1805, Crotthers journied to New York City to study for four years under Dr. Mason, a well known theologian of the day. At the New York school Crotthers "... had the reputation of being the most eminent theologian of his class."71 Throughout his anti-slavery


71 Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, no page number.
career his writing and thought were decidedly marked by an emphasis on Biblical justification. Conversely, "Nothing shocked him so much as an attempt to defend slavery from the Bible." \(^{72}\)

Returning to Kentucky in 1809, Crothers was quickly licensed to preach, and for the next year he acted as an itinerant missionary in Ohio, Kentucky, and Illinois. Then in 1810 Crothers was called to Chillicothe, Ohio, where he remained until around 1813. He later moved to nearby Greenfield, staying in both places a total of approximately five years. In 1818 he resigned his Greenfield position to return to Kentucky for two years, there to teach and preach in an academy. It was during this return trip to Kentucky that the young preacher joined the Presbyterian Church. Crothers returned to Ohio in 1820. For the remainder of his career he was pastor of a church in Greenfield, Highland County, Ohio. \(^{73}\)

While Samuel Crothers and John Rankin were soldiers in the same army, they differed somewhat in their tactical preferences. It was Crothers' belief that the church was

\[^{72}\text{Andrew Ritchie, The Life and Writings of Rev. Samuel Crothers, D.D., (Cincinnati, 1857), p. 204. Hereafter cited as Ritchie, Crothers.}\]

\[^{73}\text{Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, no page; History of Ross and Highland Counties, Ohio (Cleveland, 1850), p. 436; Hereafter cited as Ross and Highland Counties.}\]
the institution or means through which slavery should most properly be abolished. This is, of course, not to say that Rankin disapproved of the use of the church in the struggle to rid the country of slavery. Nor is it meant to suggest that Crothers was opposed to any extra-church approaches. Each man participated in both forms of emancipationist activity during their careers. There is, however, a difference of degree. Rankin was a multi-faceted activist working on many levels, including the Underground Railroad and as an itinerant anti-slavery agent. Crothers, on the other hand, was more of a behind-the-scenes publicist and persuader sticking mainly, but by no means exclusively, to the church as a vehicle of abolitionist action.

An example of this outlook can be seen in a statement made by Crothers to a fellow anti-slavery clergyman, Thomas E. Thomas. Speaking of some lectures given by two Garrisonian anti-slavery agents, Crothers said, "... I confess, I do not like to be identified with Garrison abolitionists. I believe the machinery which they are employing is calculated to overturn every good institution, human or divine, ..."74 Just the same, he admitted that he thought the lectures had done much good for the cause at hand. To Crothers, who was so thoroughly committed to religion as a means of reform, non-church oriented abolition

74 Thomas, Letters, pp. 37-38.
did not have the same impact or meaning as religiously based emancipationist doctrine. No matter how well-intentioned non-church abolitionists might be they still did not represent a Christian institution, and they thereby posed a kind of threat, that is, the threat of achieving what to Crothers was a divine goal through nonsectarian means.

The evidence of Crothers' anti-slavery activities prior to the 1820's is almost nonexistent. But the son of one of his early abolitionist colleagues has said, 

... he exercised a wide influence in the early days of Presbyterianism in Ohio. His early prominence and distinguished service in the Anti-Slavery cause, merit the highest honor. It has been said that 'Dr. Crothers was one of the fathers of Anti-Slavery literature.'

D. L. Dumond also states, "Gilliland, Rankin, the two Dickeys, and Samuel Crothers made the Chillicothe Presbytery of Ohio an antislavery stronghold before 1820." Aside from these broad statements there is unfortunately no record of his specific anti-slavery activities before about 1827.

The first notable literary contribution from Crothers that was considered important by other abolitionists came between 1827 and 1831 when fifteen of his letters were

75 Ibid., p. 22.
76 Dumond, Antislavery, p. 91.
published in the Cincinnati Journal. The series was entitled, "An Appeal to Patriots and Christians in Behalf of the Enslaved Africans." It was intended as a systematic, Biblical refutation of slaveholding. Crother's "Appeal," coming after Rankin's Letters on Slavery, appears to have been influential in that part of the country, and "... to them, in great degree, we attribute the organized movement which soon followed..." 77

Not too long after beginning this series of letters and prior to their completion, Crothers, along with another of the Chillicothe abolitionist ministers, James Gilliland, was appointed by the Presbytery to prepare a pastoral letter "on the subject of slavery." Two letters were presented for approval, both of which were adopted, "... and it was resolved that they be published together, and that eighteen thousand copies be printed." 78 The Presbytery as a body thus recognized Crothers' ability with a pen and, in the years to come, frequently called on him to assist in the fight against slavery.

As we have already seen, Crothers' writing was not limited to church-sponsored works alone, although he did argue almost exclusively from a Biblical foundation. "He wrote for the press as well, taking as active part in

77 Ritchie, Crothers, p. 150.
78 Washington-Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 235.
those controversies which grew out of slavery and intemperance." In 1835, for example, he had an article published in the Quarterly Anti-Slavery Magazine, as well as a series of five letters, "... which were largely read, in answer to Dr. Young, President of Centre College, and to Dr. Hoge of Princeton, both of whom published articles in extenuation, if not in defense of slavery." His other important works include "Strictures on African Slavery," "The Gospel of the Typical Servitude," and "The Gospel of the Jubilee."

Nor were Crothers' activities confined solely to writing. In 1833 or 1834 he was instrumental in forming an abolition society in his section of the county. Up to this time there were few anti-slavery publications in that part of Ohio, but the Paint Valley Abolition Society, as it was named, provided a sounding board as well as financial aid for the publication of anti-slavery tracts. Crothers made use of the Society in this way himself. Both "Strictures on African Slavery" and "The Gospel of the Typical Servitude" for instance were read to the society before they were published. There is evidence too that Crothers was at times a delegate to the state anti-slavery society's annual meetings. It is known, for example, that

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79 Ross and Highland Counties, p. 436.  
80 Thomas, Letters, p. 22.  
81 Ritchie, Crothers, p. 151.
in 1844 he attended the state convention, which was held at Hamilton, Ohio.\textsuperscript{62}

Samuel Crothers' actions within the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church paint a picture of hatred of slavery coupled with, and sometimes in conflict with, his devotion and loyalty to the Church. Despite the 1818 resolution against slavery, the General Assembly in the 1820's and 1830's successfully ignored the slavery question, ostensibly to avoid dividing the Church along sectional lines. Crothers, often a delegate to the Assembly, fought continually within the organization to correct this omission. A considerable number, though not a majority, of the delegates year after year favored exclusion of slaveholders from communion. Crothers was a leading member of this large anti-slavery minority. "Among the contestants, Dr. Crothers bore a conspicuous place, and we think evinced a familiarity with the subject, as far as Bible authority was concerned, second to none."\textsuperscript{63}

In discussing the career of Samuel Crothers, it will be necessary to cross the artificial boundary of 1840 placed on this investigation; for it is in the controversy over the 1838 schism that his character becomes most clear. While his hatred of slavery is not in question, we can see

\textsuperscript{62}Ritchie, Crothers, p. 151; Thomas, Letters, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{63}Ritchie, Crothers, p. 182.
in his reaction to the split a very conservative and loyal attitude toward the traditional institution of the church. In spite of his frequent criticism of the Old School body for its laxity toward slaveholding, Crothers remained loyal to it throughout his ministry. He wrote to Thomas E. Thomas in December of 1840:

I believe that if we can do anything about slavery, it will be done in the Old School Body. The other is hopeless—their course is despicable... I believe that sin of slavery is at the bottom of our difficulties; and I also believe that subject is likely to bring us together.84

The same sense of loyalty can again be seen four years later in reference to the movement, led by Rankin and others, to form still another national body, a Free Presbyterian Church. In another letter to Thomas, Crothers lists the reasons for his opposition to such an anti-slavery Presbyterian Church:

... we would soon find ourselves in a denomination with whom we could agree on no subject except the sinfulness of slavery; and finally, we would quarrel about what constitutes a good abolitionist.85

Loyalty to the church in both these cases outweighed his feelings of disappointment over the church's failure to take a strong stand against slavery. More volatile, impatient men like Rankin went with a completely new

84 Thomas, Letters, p. 21.
85 Ibid., p. 64.
organization when they felt the old was no longer responsive. Crothers, on the other hand, chose to remain and fight from within the traditional institution.

Samuel Crothers' long fight against slavery ended in Greenfield, where he preached continuously for the last thirty-six years of his life. His death in 1856 prevented him from seeing the results of his anti-slavery labors. But in view of his religious feelings, perhaps the taste of war, no matter how righteous he might have felt the cause to be, would have repulsed him more than did the hated institution of slavery. He was an earnest man in many ways, but he always kept one thing above all else--the Christian Gospel.

"He was an earnest opposer of secret societies, an earnest temperance man, and an earnest anti-slavery man, but he regarded these only as side issues." He never allowed them to turn him aside from the great subject of his ministrations.86

86 Wilson, *Presbyterian Almanac*, no page.
CHAPTER V

HUGH S. FULLERTON

Another of the Chillicothe anti-slavery contingent, Hugh S. Fullerton, though never achieving the fame of a Rankin or Crothers, nevertheless added to the reputation of the presbytery as an abolitionist center. Neither was he as prolific or accomplished at writing as were those two, but he was every bit as much an abolitionist in his belief. Like most of his fellow anti-slavery ministers he was a man who based his life on principles; principles that he stood by, sometimes in face of great opposition, right to the end.

Fullerton was born near Greencastle, Pennsylvania in 1805 to Scotch-Irish parents, but they soon moved to Orange County, New York. The family stayed in New York until 1812 when they took up residence in Baltimore. The stay in Baltimore was short, however, due to the elder Fullerton's failure in a business venture. Then in 1815 they went on to a new start in the frontier setting of Fayette County, Ohio. 87

87Ibid.
While the Fullertons were still living in New York, Hugh's father was the owner of a slave. According to an early biographer, the slave decided one night to flee for his freedom. Mr. Fullerton naturally went after the runaway. As the story goes, young Hugh was playing at the side of the road as his father successfully returned from the chase with the escapee bound and riding a horse. The look of utter dejection and hopelessness on the captured slave's face struck an indelible image on the boy's mind, which turned him into an abolitionist at the tender age of six. 88 Such "cherry tree" type stories as this often bring looks of amused cynicism to the faces of many historians, but at least we can be sure that Fullerton was exposed to slaveholding at an early age. An experience such as described above is not altogether unbelievable, even though its credibility may be seriously questioned for lack of corroborating evidence.

The source material on Fullerton is slight. His boyhood years in Ohio are obscure, but there is nothing to indicate that they were in any way out of the ordinary. The years 1824 through 1826, however, were very much out of the ordinary for a young man barely twenty years of age. During these years almost the entire Fullerton family was wiped out by an epidemic of some kind of fever. 89 Thus very

88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
early in life Hugh S. Fullerton was stripped of any family obligations he might have felt, and allowed by circumstances to begin the educational preparation for his life's work.

Upon the death of his family Fullerton was taken under the care of the Chillicothe Presbytery, of which his parents had been members, and with the financial help of some friends he entered Ohio University. Perhaps he wished to avoid prolonged obligation to his benefactors, or perhaps he was just extraordinarily ambitious; in any event, Fullerton wore himself out physically as he successfully completed three years of work in only one. Then after a rest to restore his sapped body, Fullerton began studying theology under Samuel Crothers at Greenfield, along with teaching and lecturing, which was his means of support while he prepared for the ministry.\(^{90}\) In 1830 at the age of twenty-five he was licensed to preach, and in 1831 or 1832 he was called to the Union Church near Chillicothe where he was shortly thereafter installed.\(^{91}\) It was also around this same time that Fullerton began his anti-slavery work.

The ardent with which he threw himself into the anti-slavery movement, just then begun throughout the country and especially his efforts to improve

\(^{90}\)Ibid.

the mental and spiritual condition of the large number of colored people in Chillicothe awoke much opposition. 92

Many wealthy families from Virginia and Kentucky had come to Chillicothe in order to escape the slave system. Most of these families brought their slaves with them so that they might be emancipated on free soil. Naturally, many of the ex-slaves stayed in Chillicothe to work as domestics for their ex-masters. The servants and maids were, of course, forced to live in a certain section of the town, which soon became a slum area. 93 Fullerton's first known act in the movement to help the Blacks in this country was an attempt to educate these slum dwellers in Chillicothe.

No schools had been set up for the emancipated Blacks when they were brought to the town, and when Fullerton arrived there around 1832 the situation was, to his way of thinking, deplorable. He undertook the correction of this lack of educational opportunity by engaging, after much searching, a "young lady of cultivated intellect and high social position from northern Ohio." 94 That was not the end of it, however. The arrival of the young teacher in Chillicothe was to provide Fullerton with his first taste of large-scale opposition growing out of racial

93 WHS, Fayette County, Vol. XIV.
94 Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, Vol. II, no page.
prejudices. Not one house in the town would open its
door to a woman who would stoop so low as to teach ex-
slaves. Fullerton and his wife were forced, therefore, to
board the lady in their own cramped dwelling. 95

Still the trouble was not over. Some of the ladies
of the church decided that further action was necessary,
and they elected one of their number to go to Fullerton
to protest his "... harboring a nigger school-teacher." 96
Fullerton's defense, supposedly winning the protestor over,
is an interesting piece of argumentation. He took this
tack with her:

The Negroes were there walking the streets, filling
the houses of the whites whom they served with the
ignorance, superstition, and vice, polluting, like
the frogs of the Egyptian plague, the very ovens
and kneading troughs of the white populations,
contaminating the minds of the children of the
church, with their heathenish notions and their
immoralities. 97

This line of reasoning indicates one of two things. Either
Fullerton was a very clever man appealing to the lady's
prejudice and fear of racial contamination to win his way,
or he actually believed in this logic himself, which makes
him appear less an altruistic humanitarian and more a white
man doing what he thought necessary to preserve his own

95 Thomas, Letters, p. 22.
96 Ibid.
race's superiority. Unfortunately the lack of evidence remaining for the historian makes the solution to that puzzle all but unknowable. In any event, Fullerton's four years of "... labor in Chillicothe prostrated him and he had to resign." In 1837 he accepted the call of the Salem, Ohio church where he preached for the next twenty-six years.98

In order to fully understand Fullerton's attitude toward the slavery question, it is necessary to follow his career on past the 1838 schism; for it was in the 1840's that the record of his thoughts and activities becomes more abundant. This does not mean, however, that he was inactive before the '40's. After the 1832 school-teacher episode in Chillicothe, Fullerton never ceased in his anti-slavery efforts. In 1835, for instance, he was a delegate to the founding convention of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society. A letter that same year to Theodore D. Weld from some abolitionist-minded students at Ohio University indicates the students' high regard for Fullerton. In a post script aimed at persuading Weld to come to lecture to them, they said, "Rev. Mr. Fullerton is here at this time; he thinks it would be well for you to come."99 The students

98 Ibid.

evidently must have felt that dropping Fullerton's name would be a spur to Weld, and, at the very least, it shows that Fullerton's name was known to the more famous Weld. Beyond this, it can only be said that Fullerton was active as a member of the Chillicothe Presbytery, whose work against slavery increased after the mid-1820's.

Perhaps because he had been a theological student under Crothers, Fullerton was a strong opponent of those who left the church in 1838 to join the New School body. Although an

... outspoken anti-slavery man, he was absolutely opposed to going out of the Church because there were slaveholders in it and opposed the movement for a free church believing that the place to fight against any wrong that might be in the Church was in the Church and not out of it.100

This is the same position advocated by Crothers on the issue of the split.

Even with that strong opinion, Fullerton was pushed to the brink of secession from his church when the 1845 Old School General Assembly passed a resolution that all but advocated a pro-slavery point of view. In effect, the General Assembly refused to make slaveholding a bar to Christian communion. Even Crothers, who was staunchly anti-secessionist, became enraged over this action and unsuccessfully moved to refuse to send delegates to the

100 Robert C. Galbraith, History of Salem Church (South Salem, 1903), p. 15. Hereafter cited as Galbraith, Salem Church.
following year's assembly. A letter from Fullerton to his close friend and fellow Old School abolitionist, Thomas E. Thomas, shows the Salem minister's dismay and disappointment over the assembly's action:

The report of our Assembly is utterly abominable. . . . I feel as you do on secession. I have always opposed it strongly. But if the church, either by her action, or inaction, sanctions the Assembly's doctrines, why—why—why I can't stand it.

And of the possibility of a final break over the slavery question he said,

If the Assembly, either by action or inaction, should ratify the proceedings of the last, our churches will go . . . . I love our church. It is like death to part with her. But if she has taken her final stand on the subject, I can say, 'the bitterness of death is past.'

Thanks largely to his own efforts, Fullerton was never forced to make that final, dreaded break with the church to which he felt such loyalty. As delegates to the 1846 Assembly, Fullerton and Thomas were instrumental in the passage of a resolution which allowed them to compromise although it did not significantly change in any way the body's refusal to bar slaveholders from communion. It stated:

Resolved, that in the judgement of the House, the action of the General Assembly in 1845 was not

101 Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 168.
102 Thomas, Letters, p. 74; Thomas, Letters, p. 66.
intended to deny or rescind the testimony often offered by the General Assemblies previous to that date.\textsuperscript{103}

The previous testimony referred to was the famous 1818 anti-slavery resolution, which had been pushed through more than twenty-five years earlier by Dyer Burgess and others. The passage of this 1845 resolution can be considered little more than a sop thrown to the anti-slavery delegates by the rest of the assembly. Fullerton was free to stay with the church he so loved, but the victory was a hollow one. The Old School Assembly was still a haven for pro-slavery Presbyterians.

Possibly the earliest anti-slavery preacher of the entire Chillicothe coterie was a man born, raised, and educated in the South, who not only came north to avoid the hated institution, but who also brought many of his congregation with him. The Rev. James Gilliland was born in Lincoln County, South Carolina on October 28, 1769. After receiving a normal education for a South Carolina youth of that early date, Gilliland went off to Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, where he graduated in October 1792 at the age of twenty-three. According to his son, "He became an abolitionist while at College . . . ."\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{103}Ibid., p. 71.
\textsuperscript{104}Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 144.
would place the beginning of Gilliland's advocacy of anti-slavery principles four months prior to Rankin's birth, at the very least.

Returning to South Carolina in 1794, after studying theology for two more years with Rev. W. C. Davis, Gilliland was licensed to preach in September by the Presbytery of South Carolina. Two years later, in 1796, he ran into his first opposition from pro-slavery forces. Upon the event of his ordination and installation at Broadway Church in South Carolina, the young preacher was charged with "political treason" by twelve members of the congregation and a remonstrance was signed against him for his anti-slavery views. He was installed in spite of this action, but the Presbyterian Synod of the Carolinas meeting at Morgantown in November of that year decreed that Gilliland could not publically speak in favor of emancipation any further. He reluctantly obeyed this order and stayed at the Broadway Church until 1804 or 1805, at which time "his convictions of the subject of slavery becoming stronger, he determined to move from under its influences . . . ."

Consequently, he and some of his congregation packed their belongings and headed for the " . . . greatest single mecca for emancipated slaves and exslaveholders, Brown County, Ohio . . . ."105

105 Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 534; Dumond, Anti-slavery, p. 91.
Like Rankin fifteen years later, Gilliland continued, even increased, his anti-slavery work after his arrival in Ohio. He was installed at the Red Oak Church in 1806 and soon thereafter began his Ohio-based abolitionist activities. He was a leading abolitionist at this very early date and an "... uncompromising advocate of immediate emancipation." 106 In fact, Galbraith claims, "He was the first abolitionist minister in Brown County." 107 Since Brown County was a center for anti-slavery advocates, who were also very often ex-slaveholders, his job was somewhat easier than it might have been in other parts of the state.

Despite his early start in the anti-slavery movement, the record of his specific actions between 1805 and 1820 is sparse. There are, however, a number of statements from some contemporaries that attest to his abolitionist character. According to Thomas E. Thomas, an anti-slavery colleague and friend of many of the Chillicothe group, "Gen. Birney says that 'from 1805 to 1822, the recognized abolition leader in Southern Ohio.'" 108 Not only did he preach against the institution from his pulpit and in his

106 Dumond, Antislavery, p. 91.
107 Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 105.
108 Thomas, Letters, p. 36.
home county, but "He was also the first (Presbyterian) minister west of the Alleghenies to lift a voice in Presbytery and Synod against the national sin of slavery."\textsuperscript{109} "The Reverend James Gilliland was," in fact, "one of the earliest churchmen in southern Ohio to take a decided stand against slavery."\textsuperscript{110} And, when John Rankin arrived at nearby Ripley in 1822, "... the church organized here by the Rev. James Gilliland, was largely abolitionist."\textsuperscript{111}

In 1820, moreover, Gilliland took up the pen to further the cause of emancipation. He wrote and published a pamphlet in dialogue form favoring the immediate emancipation of the slaves, and, according to Thomas, the pamphlet enjoyed wide circulation. Again in 1829 the literary skill of Gilliland was called upon by the Presbytery to prepare a letter on the subject of slavery to be sent to the churches under its care. Crothers had been asked to prepare a similar letter. The letters of both men were accepted, and 18,000 copies of each were printed and distributed.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{109}WHS, Vol. II, excerpt from obituary of Charles Gilliland, no page.

\textsuperscript{110}Purtee, \textit{Underground Railroad}, p. 55.

\textsuperscript{111}Galbraith, \textit{Chillicothe}, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{112}Adams, \textit{Neglected Period}, p. 60; Washington-Chillicothe Presbytery, pp. 283 and 235.
It was also in 1829 that the Chillicothe Presbytery passed a resolution stating that slaveholding was a sin that required the punitive action of the Church. Gilliland strongly favored the resolution as did a large majority of the Chillicothe Presbytery's ministers. Speaking of the 1829 resolution as well as of the entire slavery question, he stated that "Had the church kept her hands clear of the bloodycrime, it is possible, nay it is almost certain that slavery in these United States would have long ago been abolished."\(^{113}\) On this point Gilliland was adamant. Indeed, so strongly did he believe in the church's role in the slavery issue that he feared total destruction was near because of the refusal of men, especially church men, to face up to the sin and denounce it. It was the churches' duty, he declared, to exclude from communion all who were guilty of the sin.\(^{114}\)

Gilliland's career included activity in abolitionist societies as well. Thomas maintains that he was the first of the Chillicothe ministers on the rolls of any abolition society. In fact, he was "second on the list of vice-presidents of the American Anti-Slavery Society when it was organized in 1833."\(^{115}\) The Gilliland family--James and his

\(^{113}\)Adams, *Neglected Period*, p. 100.

\(^{114}\)Ibid.

wife had thirteen children—was also prominent in the Ripley Anti-Slavery Society, which was formed in 1835. Moreover, a number of the prominent anti-slavery families of both Gilliland's and Rankin's congregations were conspicuous on the society's membership list. These included "... the Dunlaps, Shepherds, Bairds, McCoys, Campbells, McCagues, and Collins, most of whom if not all, came from the slave states..."\textsuperscript{116}

Nor was Gilliland absent when it came to working with the people whom he was endeavoring to free. In 1833, for instance, he spent eight days doing missionary work among the free Blacks in Brown County, of whom the 1830 census shows 550.\textsuperscript{117} Beyond normal missionary work of that nature, Gilliland and his sons aided the Rankin's who lived south of them by maintaining a trunk line on the Underground Railroad. After reaching Rankin's house on a high bluff overlooking the Ohio River in Ripley, most of the fugitive slaves were then moved on by the Rankin boys to Gilliland's church or house in Red Oak. Several members of Gilliland's congregation also provided shelter for the runaways.\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[116] Ripley Minutebook, pp. 6-7; Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 3.
\item[117] Welsh, Buckeye, p. 82.
\item[118] Grim, Rankin, p. 38; Purtee, Underground Railroad, p. 55.
\end{footnotes}
The Reverend James Gilliland began his life-long fight against slavery very early in the movement, perhaps even before it could be considered a movement. But his fight ended considerably before the issue was decided. He died in 1845 near his Red Oak Church after having served it for almost forty years.\footnote{119} In view of his early and unwavering dedication to the cause, he more than others in the Chillicothe Presbytery, "... perhaps deserves to be called the father of the abolition movement in the Presbyterian Church."\footnote{120}

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\begin{footnotes}
119 Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 144; Thomas, Letters, p. 37.
120 Welsh, "Rural Presbytery," p. 141.
\end{footnotes}
CHAPTER VI

JAMES H. DICKEY

Another of the Southern-born ministers who helped add to the anti-slavery reputation of the Chillicothe Presbytery was the Rev. James H. Dickey. Although born in Halifax County, Virginia on October 24, 1780, Dickey grew up in South Carolina and, after 1785, in Kentucky. Since he spent the years normally devoted to schooling in the frontier state of Kentucky, Dickey's chances of receiving a formal education were greatly diminished. He did, nevertheless, briefly attend a number of schools as they were available, and in 1806 he became a candidate for the ministry under care of the Lexington, Kentucky Presbytery. Only two years later he was licensed to preach by the same body. 121

He spent the next couple of years as an itinerant domestic missionary in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio, and in April of 1811 he was called to preach by the Buckskin Congregation, serving the villages of Salem, Concord, and Pisgah, in Ross County, Ohio. There he

121 Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, Vol. II, no page; Thomas, Letters, p. 75.
remained for twenty-six years before moving on to a church in Illinois. By this time he was known throughout the country as an anti-slavery man, "one of the earliest, most influential, and active of Presbyterian Ohio Abolitionists." 

Dickey did not wait until he settled in Ohio to begin his anti-slavery work. His hatred of the institution arose not after he had freed himself of it, but while he lived in its midst. "He became the earnest friend of liberty and opponent of slavery even before he left a slave state. It was this that led him to leave Kentucky and seek a home in Ohio." 

As has been shown, Dickey was certainly not the only Chillicothe Presbyterian minister to be born and raised in a slave state. But he was one of the few who had actually held slaves during the time he lived in the South. It is said that he had once even thought of purchasing some slaves, but when his continental money depreciated, he was unable to do so. He acquired slaves by inheritance on his wife's side of the family. Shortly after their marriage

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123 Thomas, Letters, p. 78.
125 Ibid.
they freed their slaves with the exception of one young boy who came north with the young couple and lived with them in Ohio. Again, much later in his life, after leaving the Chillicothe Presbytery, Dickey received slaves through inheritance. These slaves were also freed, but instead of simply emancipating them Dickey, along with some others, sent the ex-slaves to Liberia. This action is somewhat surprising in view of the general hatred of colonization evidenced by most of the abolitionist ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery. The event of his colonization of the Blacks occurred, however, in 1853, which may indicate that Dickey's removal from the strongly anti-slavery Chillicothe Presbytery coupled with his advanced age had given him over to a more conservative point of view. The exact reasons for this seemingly untypical act will probably never be known, and any judgment of Dickey based on this incident would be ill-founded.

Indeed, if one is to judge James H. Dickey on the concrete evidence that remains, the conclusion would have to be that he was a staunch anti-slavery advocate. Dr. Samuel Steele, himself connected with the Presbytery, had this to say about Dickey:

It may be proper to observe that Mr. Dickey was one of those ministers of Ohio who, although

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126 Galbraith, Salem Church, p. 7; Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, Vol. II, p. 130.
born and reared in slave states, took an active part . . . in arousing the churches and people to a sense of the evils of slavery. He gave both his tongue and pen occasionally to the advancement of that cause.

And of himself Dickey said, "I am an abolitionist which means nothing more than slavery should be abolished." 127

In 1835 at the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to which Dickey was a delegate, a committee was formed to study the courses of action available in dealing with the numerous anti-slavery petitions and memorials that had accumulated on the clerk's table. James H. Dickey was one of the five members of that committee; Dr. Samuel Miller of Princeton was the chairman. The committee's job was to report back at the next year's assembly, at which time it was hoped that the body could take its final vote on the divisive issue of slavery. 128

The 1836 General Assembly was subsequently presented with a report advising that no action be taken on the matter of slavery. The pro-slavery elements, in other words, had won the battle. Dickey presented a minority report disagreeing with the findings of the other members of the committee and upholding the 1818 stand of the church on the


question, but to no avail. The report was adopted by the General Assembly, and the question of slaveholding was put off yet another time.¹²⁹ Time, however, was running out; it was only two years later that this very question, along with some others, finally split the church and accomplished the very thing that many of the delegates, who had voted in favor of the committee's report, were trying to avoid.

¹³⁶ also found Dickey at another convention, this time the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society meeting at Granville, Ohio. This was a convention, by the way, which was met by a violent reaction on the part of the residents of Granville, showing the steadily growing feeling of opposition that abolitionist activity was arousing in Ohio. It was also a meeting at which many of the Chillicothe ministers were in attendance. Two of them, Dickey and John Rankin, offered the following resolution before the convention:

Resolved, That the American slave trade involves within itself all the cruelties and horrors of the African; therefore, we call on all those who are carrying it on, at once to cease.¹³⁰

It should also be noted that Dickey, as stated earlier, figured prominently in the founding convention of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society the year before. It was he, in fact, who was called upon to give the opening prayer. Attendance

¹²⁹Thompson, Presbyterian Churches, p. 123.
at anti-slavery conventions such as the one in Granville and joint authorship of anti-slavery resolutions with such men as John Rankin can leave little doubt that Dickey was, at this point at least, considered by other abolitionists to be a sincere and devoted anti-slavery worker.

James Dickey left the Salem Church in 1837 for another congregation in Illinois. Before moving on, however, he took leave from the Presbytery to act as an anti-slavery agent. Working in that capacity in the Synod of Cincinnati in 1838, when the Presbyterian schism occurred, Dickey was confronted by the dilemma that all Presbyterians faced that year. He experienced the same uncertainty and questioning. It was while he was trying to decide which way to go in the dispute that he said; "I hate New Schoolism--and I hate slavery, ..." and "the Old School Assembly are sic I suppose the most thoroughly imbued with pro-slavery views." Despite his admitted hatred of slavery and his knowledge of the Old School's lenient attitude toward it, Dickey could not give up his traditional affiliations. He, like Crothers and Fullerton, chose to stay within the erring body and work for change from within.131

James H. Dickey served both the church and the anti-slavery cause in Ohio for about twenty-seven years. He preached against slavery, wrote against it, organized and joined societies against it, and was known as an Underground Railroad operator as well.\footnote{Purtee, Underground Railroad, p. 118.} Even though he left the Ohio movement long before slavery was abolished, his reputation is assured. Gilbert H. Barnes and D. L. Dumond, speaking of both James and his brother, William, summarized the role Dickey played in the anti-slavery crusade when they wrote: "Together with John Rankin, Samuel Crothers, Van Dyke, and the Gillilands, all of them former Kentuckians, they made the Chillicothe Presbytery almost solidly anti-slavery in sentiment."\footnote{Barnes and Dumond, Letters, p. 272.}
CHAPTER VII

WILLIAM Dickey

William Dickey, of whom Barnes and Dumond spoke, was the half-brother of James. As is unfortunately the case for most of the ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery, the record of William Dickey's life and anti-slavery activities is meager. It is known, however, that he was born in York District, South Carolina on December 12, 1774. His father, a Revolutionary War veteran, moved the family to Kentucky at the war's close, and there William was reared. Almost nothing is known of his early years except that he was educated for the ministry in Nashville, Tennessee and was eventually licensed to preach, probably in Kentucky in 1802.\(^{134}\)

The first fifteen years of William Dickey's ministry took place in Kentucky, but there is no evidence of any anti-slavery activities during his stay there. This does not mean, of course, that no such activities were ever undertaken by the young preacher. He may well have been an active abolitionist, but the record is blank. Then, in 1817, \(^{134}\)Dills, Fayette County, p. 980; Wilson, Presbyterian Almanac, Vol. VI, no page.

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William Dickey came north to Bloomingburg, Ohio where he organized a Presbyterian Church. There he remained until his death in 1857.\textsuperscript{135}

Perhaps a picture of "Father Dickey's" anti-slavery zeal can best be drawn from a description of the church he organized and nurtured in its early years. The Bloomingburg Presbyterian Church soon developed a reputation of possessing a strongly emancipationist congregation. The church building itself was the butt of pro-slavery rage several times. "It was often assaulted by whiskey and slave power mobs, and discussions which brought people from a long distance were held in it."\textsuperscript{136} Indeed, the entire town of Bloomingburg was known as an abolition center, due largely to the work of the Presbyterians under William Dickey's leadership:

Bloomingburg was well known for its anti-slavery influence, and its generous activity in the management of what was called the underground railroad, long before the anti-slavery society was formed. Here the dusky fugitives from bondage were fed, clothed and sent on their way, encouraged and rejoicing with the hope of gaining freedom by reaching the free soil of Canada. It took no ordinary degree of self-sacrifice to meet the responsibilities of those days, but they were borne, then amid reproaches and general exposure, now to their honor and glory ... The Presbyterians were ardent supporters of the anti-slavery cause, and in 1834, held a series of meetings at which this question was discussed.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{135} Thomas, \textit{Letters}, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{136} Dills, \textit{Fayette County}, p. 980.
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 989-990.
Dickey's activities extended beyond his own church and neighborhood. In 1835 the preacher was a delegate from Fayette County to the first convention of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society. Again in 1836 he attended the state society's convention, this time at Granville, Ohio. It was after this convention that the "Granville Riot" occurred, in which many of the homeward-bound delegates were attacked by a mob. There is no evidence to show whether or not Dickey was involved in any of the violence. In any case, it is clear that Dickey was a strong supporter of the growth of abolition societies in Ohio. He, in fact, was president of the local abolition society in Fayette County, which had the rather substantial membership of ninety-seven in 1836.¹³⁸

In the sessions of the presbytery as well, Dickey distinguished himself as a staunch supporter of anti-slavery. In just one example, it can be seen that Dickey favored strong church action against slaveholders. Dickey supported a Chillicothe Presbytery resolution in 1839 that would have cut ties between that body and any other which did not exclude slaveholders from its communion. The resolution is not in itself unusual for the Chillicothe Presbytery; a number of like resolutions were passed before

¹³⁸ Price, "Convention," p. 186-188; Minutes of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society Convention, in WHS.
and after this one. But it shows the lengths to which many of the Chillicothe ministers were willing to go within the church to make it free of slaveholding. Among those voting on this resolution, besides William Dickey, were Crothers, Fullerton, and a number of laymen. The rest of the clergymen discussed thus far were absent from the voting.\textsuperscript{139}

Actions of this kind are typical of Dickey's ardent belief in abolitionist principles, and through the years, in the Presbytery and out, he did his part in the struggle to bring an end to the institution of slavery.

Like Gilliland, at Red Oak; and Rankin, at Ripley; and Crothers, at Greenfield; and Fullerton, at Salem; and Steele, at Hillsboro, William Dickey made his own home, and congregation and community; and to them and for them he spoke as he pleased; and like each of these men he was an early and staunch pillar of Presbyterian Abolitionism.\textsuperscript{140}

\textsuperscript{139} Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 147.
\textsuperscript{140} Thomas, Letters, p. 72.
CHAPTER VIII

SAMUEL STEELE, JOHN B. MAHAN, JOHN P. VAN DYKE,
JESSE H. LOCKHART, WILLIAM A. WILLIAMSON

It has been repeated throughout this paper that the source materials on the ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery are sparse and scattered. The ministers treated above had careers of a much more varied and interesting nature than has been possible to present here. But for the following six men the scarcity of evidence is even more acute. It is consequently possible to relate only scattered incidents of their lives; incidents that indicate, nevertheless, that these men were, indeed, anti-slavery advocates in the Chillicothe Presbytery.

Dr. Samuel Steele, the first of these six, was born in Londonderry, Ireland in 1796. There he spent his boyhood, and at age twenty, in 1816, came to America where he studied with his brother, who was a minister near Philadelphia. Later he attended Princeton Seminary in New Jersey and was licensed to preach in 1825 at Winchester, Kentucky. After spending about ten years laboring in Kentucky, he moved in 1835 to Hillsborough, Ohio which lies within the
Chillicothe Presbytery. He remained a preacher there until his death in 1869.\textsuperscript{141}

Of all the Chillicothe ministers studied, Steele was the most conservative regarding the slavery question. He opposed the institution of slavery, but he was much less prone to take strong action against it within the church. In this respect he was very much unlike his close friend and fellow clergyman, Samuel Grothers. Thomas E. Thomas in comparing Steele to Grothers had this to say:

He was as unlike Grothers as two men could be; although they were the warmest friends. Dr. Grothers did the fighting: Dr. Steele was the beloved physician pouring balm upon the wounded, and often, indeed, preventing a fight.\textsuperscript{142}

Steele did not favor political action as part of the abolitionist strategy. In a letter to Thomas in January of 1841, Steele not only refused to go to the anti-slavery convention in Columbus that year because of its involvement with politics, but he also criticized the abolition press on the same grounds: "... our anti-slavery press has got so far into the whirlpool of political action that other influences are well nigh overlooked ... ."\textsuperscript{143}

Indeed, compared to other Chillicothe anti-slavery men, like

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., p. 24.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., p. 26.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., p. 25.
Rankin or William Dickey, Steele was rather subdued, even meek, regarding abolitionist actions. He was a man of peace preferring charity and patience over confrontation and open debate.

On the surface such actions as these might lead one to question the degree to which Samuel Steele actually wanted an end to slavery. He honestly appears, however, judging from the evidence at hand, to have possessed a desire to see an end to the institution. His difference of opinion came on means rather than ends. This can be seen in his "nay" vote on the 1839 resolution of the Presbytery, mentioned above, which sought to sever the ties of the Chillicothe churches with any other presbytery that did not make slaveholding a reason for refusing communion. To Steele such action was deplorable. Slaveholding members of the church must come to their own conclusions as to the sin of slavery; they should not be forced. Perhaps his views were most succinctly summed up by Dr. Steele himself: "If moral, persuasive, and religious influence will not move them, we must leave them to God's providential dealings, which may come, I fear, in the way of vengeance."  

\[144\] Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 147.  
\[145\] Thomas, Letters, p. 25.
John B. Mahan, a man very unlike Samuel Steele, helped provide the Chillicothe Presbytery with its anti-slavery reputation in quite a different way than most of the ministers discussed here. Mahan was the unlikely combination of Presbyterian preacher and hotel keeper in Sardinia, Ohio, who openly professed his anti-slavery views. Apparently he was also an Underground Railroad operator as well. At least a certain William Greathouse of Mason County, Kentucky thought he was, because in 1838 he made a charge against Mahan for aiding a fugitive slave to escape. The Mason County grand jury subsequently handed down an indictment, and Mahan "...was handed over to the jurisdiction of its court on a requisition issued by the governor of Kentucky."\(^{145}\) The Governor of Ohio made himself very unpopular in that part of the state for complying with the requisition, but Mahan was, nevertheless, taken to Kentucky to stand trial.

As it turned out Mahan never had to face the jury, although he did remain in jail in Washington County, Kentucky for sixteen months pending trial. He was released after that time on $1400 bond, which was put up by William Dunlapp, a friend and Underground Railroad operator from Ripley, Ohio. The bond was eventually forfeited, because "It was thought unwise for the accused man to return to

Kentucky to face trial," and all of Mahan's property was subsequently turned over to Dunlapp to pay off the debt.147

The Mahan incident apparently grew out of the chance witnessing by a slavehunter of one of William Greathouse's runaways eating at Mahan's hotel. Whether or not Mahan knowingly aided the fugitive is unclear. In his own defense Mahan wrote:

However much every good man desires that slavery should have an end, and however much Abolitionists are willing to hazard and sacrifice for this oppressed, degraded and despised portion of our fellow men, I am confident that few, if any, for various reasons, would invade the jurisdiction of another State to give aid or encouragement to slaves to escape from their owners. But it ought not to be concealed that a very great majority of Northern people, as well as those that are not Abolitionists as well as those that are Abolitionists (however much human nature has been marred by sin) are not capable of violating sympathies of their nature of the dictates of their common humanity so far as to be able to drive from their doors the unsheltered, unprotected stranger, or send away, unfed, unclad, unprovided for the outcasts or wandering poor.148

It appears in the above quotation that Mahan was denying ever going into Kentucky to aid any runaways (for which he was not charged anyway), but admitting to giving food and shelter to a fugitive. Since the case never reached the trial stage, little more than this can be known about the incident.

147 Ibid.
148 History of Brown County, Ohio (Chicago, 1883), pp. 135-315. Hereafter cited as Brown County, 1883.
The evidence suggests, however, that Mahan was indeed an active operator on the Underground Railroad. Less than a year after the Kentucky incident Mahan was on trial again for causing a riot in the course of rescuing a Negro from the hands of an officer near Georgetown. This time the indictment included two prominent Presbyterian laymen of the area as well, Joseph and Amos Pettijohn. The court found Joseph Pettijohn and Mahan guilty, and they were fined $50 and sentenced to the "dungeon" of the Brown County jail for ten days with only bread and water for sustenance during their terms. The execution of the sentence was suspended during an appeal to the state Supreme Court. There the conviction was reversed by the higher court because of an error in empaneling the jury. The question of guilt or innocence was not questioned, however, at this stage; nor is there any record of Mahan or Pettijohn denying their guilt.\footnote{Ibid., p. 315.} In fact, in sentencing Mahan the court

\ldots reminded him that it had been proved on trial that he was a minister of the gospel of peace; that the riot had taken place on the Sabbath day; that instead of attending to the duties of his sacred calling he had been found traversing the country on horseback in company with armed men, violating the laws of his country and resisting a ministerial officer in the regular discharge of his duties. He 'advised him that his present situation should be a warning to him, and that he should not allow excessive philanthropy to lead him into similar aggressions in the future.'\footnote{Ibid.}
It is indeed unfortunate that so little remains to shed light on the entire career of J. B. Mahan in the anti-slavery crusade in southern Ohio. But judging solely from the two trials described above, it is certain that he was imbued with the "excessive philanthropy" as charged by the court in regards to runaway slaves.

Another of the little known anti-slavery ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery, mentioned along with the likes of Rankin, Crothers, and Gilliland as part of the abolitionist enclave of the area, was John P. Van Dyke. He was born in Adams County, Pennsylvania on October 18, 1803, and although little is known of his early life, he attended and graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio sometime in the latter half of the 1820's. He was subsequently licensed to preach in 1826 by the Miami, Ohio Presbytery. Shortly after that, in June of 1829, he accepted the call of the congregation at West Union, where he preached for 26 years before moving to the Presbyterian Church at Red Oak.\(^{151}\)

Apparently Van Dyke spent some time prior to his Ohio days in the state of Kentucky. At least Gilbert H. Barnes and D. L. Dumond believe so; they said: "Together with

John Rankin, Dyer Burgess, Samuel Crothers, Van Dyke, and the Gillilands, all of them former Kentuckians, they made the Chillicothe Presbytery almost solidly antislavery in sentiment.\textsuperscript{152}

Beyond this meager bit of information, there is one surprising fact about Van Dyke. It seems odd that someone listed along with Rankin, Burgess, and Crothers as an antislavery advocate would vote against a resolution of the Presbytery that condemned the institution. But this is exactly what Van Dyke did. Except for Sam Steele, Van Dyke was the only minister present at the 1839 session of the Presbytery who voted against the resolution that called for the Chillicothe body's severing of the ties with any other presbytery that did not make slaveholding grounds for excommunication.\textsuperscript{153} This does not necessarily mean that Van Dyke was less anti-slavery than were those voting for the resolution. Such a conclusion is not justified from this one vote. Van Dyke may have favored a different approach to the same end, or he may simply have disliked the wording of the resolution. There is simply not enough evidence available to make a judgment.

Judging by his actions in 1836, however, it is evident that Van Dyke did indeed belong among men like Rankin and

\textsuperscript{152} Barnes and Dumond, \textit{Letters}, p. 224.
\textsuperscript{153} Galbraith, \textit{Chillicothe}, p. 147.
Crothers. A letter that year was ordered written by the Presbytery to be sent to the Presbytery of Ebenezer in Kentucky. The letter was concerned with the "... alienation of feeling and affection..." in the Church due to the evil of slavery. "For all this there is a cause (i.e. slavery) and that cause exists in the church." To end the bad feeling within the Presbyterian Church, the letter offered nine strongly anti-slavery resolutions that provided for harsh treatment of slaveholding within the Church, and it ended: "It is a sin that loves the darkness and cannot endure the light." The letter was signed by "Jno. P. Van Dyke, Stated Clerk."\(^{154}\) And while it is true that on vote of the members the Presbytery ordered the letter sent, which means the Stated Clerk of the session was obliged to sign and send it, had Van Dyke been utterly opposed to the action he could have withheld his signature.

Earlier sessions of the Presbytery also show that the other members felt Van Dyke was a trustworthy abolitionist who had the ability with his pen to argue the anti-slavery case. At the January 21, 1835 meeting of the Presbytery Van Dyke and two others, Gilliland and J. H. Dickey, "... were appointed to prepare a memorial to the next

General Assembly on the subject of slavery." Later that same year, at the September 29-30 session, Van Dyke was called upon again.

On motion, resolved that a committee be appointed to prepare a circular on the subject of slavery, to be sent to each of the presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly. Jno. P. Van Dyke, Jas. Gilliland, and A. E. Lewis were appointed as this committee.

The letter was adopted and ordered to be sent at the following day's meeting.

That the well-known abolitionists of the Presbytery would choose Van Dyke so often to help pen their anti-slavery documents attests to his sincerity and deep conviction. Moreover, Theodore Weld in writing to Elizur Wright, Jr. at the General Assembly meeting in June of 1836 at Pittsburg put it even more positively:

Last year, it is not known that there were more than two decided immediate abolitionists in the Assembly—the Rev. J. P. Van Dyke, of Chillicothe presbytery, and Dr. Lansing of New York. This year immediate abolitionists constitute nearly one-fourth part of the Assembly.

The evidence suggests then, that even though Van Dyke voted against the 1839 anti-slavery resolution, he deserves to be considered, along with the better known Chillicothians, an ardent and dedicated anti-slavery man.

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156 Ibid., p. 214.

157 Barnes and Dumond, Letters, p. 156.
Like Van Dyke, little is known of Rev. Jesse H. Lockhart, who served the church in Brown County, Ohio, near where Rankin carried on his labors. Lackhart was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, December 23, 1779, but the family moved to Tennessee when Jesse was a young boy. He presumably grew up in Tennessee and received his education there; and in 1828, "Cherishing desire to breathe the free air of the North, he turned his horse's head toward Ohio, and, after a long and tiresome journey, he reached Ripley, where he met his old friend, Rev. John Rankin, who had preached him North a few years [sic]." 158

R. C. Rankin, John's son and himself an operator on the Underground Railroad, perhaps offers the best, if not the only, summary of Lockhart's anti-slavery activities. He writes:

Reverend Jesse Lockhart came from East Tennessee in 1828, and settled near the Presbyterian Church at Russellville, ten miles north of Ripley, when yet a young man, and continued his labors until called 'to the other side' at the advanced age of 75. Mr. Lockhart was brought up in the Rankin neighborhood in East Tennessee and always advocated the doctrine of immediate emancipation, and was a faithful co-worker with Gilliland and Rankin. These three congregations beginning with Rankin of the north bank of the Ohio River extending fifteen or twenty miles north, formed a very important link in what is known as the 'Underground Railway,' and all the part that these congregations took in gradual emancipation or in colonization schemes, was what they did in aiding the fugitive in his escape to Canada. And in this they made their history that no fugitive that was furnished a through ticket from Rankin's Depot was ever captured by their pursuers. 159

158 Brown County, 1883, p. 612.
159 Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 3.
The accuracy of that last statement suffers from the lack of verifying evidence. No one could, of course, know if all of the runaways traveling through their particular territory made it safely to freedom. The fact that Lockhart was an active abolitionist need not be statistically proven, however. R. C. Rankin knew him personally, as he did most of the Brown County abolitionists, and he can be considered an expert witness.

Lockhart was also active in the Ripley Anti-Slavery Society, formed in 1836, as were Gilliland and Rankin. Not only does his name appear on the membership list, but in 1847 he was elected secretary of the Society. And, in an early history of Brown County Lockhart's name appears on a list of "... prominent leaders of the anti-slavery cause ...", along with Rankin, Gilliland, and Mahan.

Abbreviated as these facts may be, it is clear that Lockhart shared in the abolitionist sentiment that was so strong throughout the whole Presbytery. His closeness to John Rankin, his Underground Railroad activities, his membership in the Ripley Anti-Slavery Society, and the testimony of R. C. Rankin do not by themselves provide a very comprehensive sketch of the man; taken together, however, they do show that Lockhart was, at the very least,

160 Ripley Minutebook, pp. 6, 33.
161 Brown County, 1883, p. 314.
strongly abolitionist in his beliefs as well as his actions.

There is but one more Chillicothe minister of whom some mention should be made, albeit brief. He is the Rev. William A. Williamson, and again the recollections of R. C. Rankin must be relied upon to relate his story. Rankin wrote:

The Reverend William Williamson emigrated to Ohio from South Carolina, and settled some sixteen miles east of this place [Ripley] in 1806. He emancipated his slaves and brought them with him. He not only gave them their freedom but he educated them.

Two of them, in fact, were given college educations, and one took up theology under John Rankin and was licensed to preach by the Chillicothe Presbytery. Like William Dickey, then, Williamson had been a part of the slave-holding system, but he came to Ohio to free his slaves and to escape the influences of the institution. Beyond Rankin's short historical account almost nothing remains that would help uncover the extent of Williamson's anti-slavery work; that is, nothing except a statement by the religious historian E. B. Welsh. He included Williamson's name, along with Crothers, Burgess, Rankin, and Gilliland, in a group to which he gives credit for bringing the issue of slavery before the Presbyterian General Assembly year after year.

162 Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 3.
163 Welsh, Buckeye, p. 74.
CHAPTER IX

DR. ALEXANDER CAMPBELL AND OTHER LAYMEN

In discussing the role of the Chillicothe Presbytery in Ohio's anti-slavery movement, the major emphasis has naturally been on the ministers of the churches within that body. They provided most of the leadership and drive in the Presbytery's abolitionist activity. This is not meant to suggest that the ministers were solely responsible for the anti-slavery character of the body. The ministers were dependent upon the aid and support of their congregations. Indeed, without tolerant congregations men like Rankin, or Crothers, or Gilliland would not have had a place from which to operate. As with most movements, however, the evidence left behind does not lend itself to an investigation of the followers. Followers are by nature not notable and are, therefore, generally lost to the historian.

Fortunately there were some laymen in the Chillicothe Presbytery who were also leaders. Mostly they came to be written about because of their activities on the Underground Railroad (some are mentioned above), but at least one was also well known for other reasons. He was Dr. Alexander
Campbell of Ripley, Ohio. Again not much is known about his early life. He was born in Green County, Virginia in 1779. As a child his family moved to Tennessee and Kentucky, the latter being where he was educated and married. Then, after serving a term in the Kentucky legislature, Campbell came to Ohio in 1804. 164

Not only was Dr. Campbell the first physician in the Ripley area, he was also the first man from Brown County to serve in the United States Senate. In fact, Campbell's political career was long and varied. Only three years after his arrival in Ohio he was elected to the State legislature in 1807 as a representative from Adams County (later Brown County). Moreover, in 1808 and 1809 he was re-elected and chosen Speaker of the House in both sessions. Then, while serving as Speaker in 1809, Edward Tiffin resigned his United States Senate seat, and Campbell was picked to fill out the unexpired term. The expiration of this term ended his political career for a few years, but it resumed again in 1822 and 1823 when he was elected to the Ohio Senate from Brown County. 1832 found him in elective office once more, this time as a State Representative. In addition, he was twice an elector, once on the 1820 Monroe ticket and

164Brown County, 1883, p. 354; Byron Williams, History of Clermont and Brown Counties, Ohio (Milford, 1913), p. 361. Hereafter cited as Williams, Clermont and Brown Counties.
again on the 1836 Harrison slate. Winning was not always
the way he ended his campaigns, however; in 1826 he was a
loser in a four-way race for governor. Most important,
from the point of view of the Chillicothe Presbytery, were
his political beliefs and outlooks: "Through all this
political action, he was sternly opposed to slavery."166

Dr. Campbell, along with many other Presbyterians
of the area, was also an active operator in the Brown County
underground railway. Their operations in that part of the
state were known well to the slavehunters who had to deal
with them, and they aroused bitter feelings in the hearts
of Kentucky slaveholders. To rid the country of Dr. Camp-
bell and his cohorts, the slaveholding interests to the
south went to great lengths, even to the point of offering
rewards.

At an anti-slavery meeting of the citizens of
Sardinia and vicinity, held on November 21, 1838,
a committee of respectable citizens presented a
report, accompanied with affidavits in support of
its declarations, stating that for more than a
year past there had been an unusual degree of
hatred manifested by the slavehunters and slave-
holders toward the Abolitionists of Brown County,
and that rewards varying from $500 to $2500 had
been repeatedly offered by different persons for
the abduction or assassination of Rev. John B.
Mahan, and rewards had also been offered for Amos
Fettjohn, William A. Frazier, and Dr. Isaac M.
Beck of Sardinia, Rev. John Rankin and Dr. Alexander

165 Ibid.

166 Williams, Clermont and Brown Counties, pp. 361-362.
All but two of these men were members of the Chillicothe Presbytery; they were Dr. Beck, who had no church ties, and William A. Frazier, whose denomination is unknown.

The Ripley Anti-Slavery Society was another aspect of Campbell's career that took up a large part of his time as an abolitionist. His name appears frequently in the society's minutebook between 1835 and 1843; in fact, he was listed as its president each of those years. And, in the January 27, 1835 meeting he, among others, gave a speech entitled the "... Duty, Necessity, practicability & Safety of immediate emancipation ..."° Then, in 1839 Campbell was chosen, in company with two other Presbyterian laymen, William McCoy and Jacob Shepherd, and Rev. James Gilliland, to attend the meeting of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society for that year.°

His political career, his Underground Railroad activity, his work in the Ripley Anti-Slavery Society—all these made Dr. Alexander Campbell the most notable abolitionist layman in the Chillicothe Presbytery. He did not live to see the final emancipation of the Blacks, however;

167 Brown County, 1883, p. 314; Columbus Dispatch, September 12, 1926.
169 Ibid., p. 23.
he died in Ripley in 1857. But to the anti-slavery movement in southern Ohio he had been an important cog—for throughout his long and varied career "He was a man of uncompromising anti-slavery principles." 170

Campbell was not the only anti-slavery man among the lay Presbyterians in the Chillicothe district. Others have been mentioned in the course of discussing the ministers of the Presbytery. There were the McCoys, the Dunlapps, the Means, the Stewarts, and more. Almost to a man they were connected with the Underground Railroad. For this reason further examination of the abolitionist laymen of the Chillicothe body will take place in a brief discussion of that "railway" within the Presbytery's bounds. The treatment of the Presbytery's underground work will be abbreviated on account of the already rather massive amount of literature on the subject and because much has been said above concerning the underground railroad activities of the ministers.

170Brown County, 1883, p. 354.
CHAPTER X

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad has probably received more attention from historians than any other phase of the abolition movement in Ohio; this is certainly true for the Chillicothe Presbytery. In almost every account of the Presbytery's anti-slavery actions the subject of Rankin's home overlooking the Ohio River, and of Gilliland's church, as havens for runaway slaves, comes into the picture. The stories of brave abolitionists risking their lives in order to aid fugitives in reaching the free soil of Canada or the North have become mythologized in some cases. In order to avoid mythology in favor of history, only what seems to be solid fact will be presented here.

Two main routes existed within the confines of the Chillicothe Presbytery, each beginning in one of the body's two river front counties, Adams and Brown. The first such

... common route followed by escaping slaves was from Ripley through the neighborhoods of Red Oak and Russelville to Sardinia; thence to the Quaker settlements in Clinton County. John W. Hudson, a colored map, did much service in piloting the fugitives. 171

171 Ibid., p. 314.

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The starting point for this route, Ripley, was the Rankin family's territory; the next stop, Red Oak, was Gilliland's responsibility; then Russelville, which was handled by Lockhart; and finally Sardinia was under the care of John B. Mahan. They were, of course, not the only conductors at those points, but they were the representatives of the Presbyterian clergy on the line during the 1820's and 1830's. (See Appendix A)

The Pettijohn families, mentioned above in connection with the Mahan trial, were among the most notable laymen on this branch of the "road." Besides John and Amos Pettijohn, there were four other families in the clan, James, Edward, Richard, and Thomas, all of whom were originally from Virginia. "It is said that all of these families were noted Abolitionists, and instilled these principles into their children, who became noted for their devotion to this then unpopular and odious doctrine."\textsuperscript{172} Also involved in the Brown County routes were Dr. Alexander Campbell and the McCoy families of Ripley, all of whom were well known for the aid and comfort given to runaways. The Dunlapps, Shepherds, Bairds, and McCagues, all Presbyterian emigrants from the South, added as well to the role of the Chillicothe Presbytery in this extra-legal phase of the abolition cause.\textsuperscript{173}

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., pp. 666-667.
\textsuperscript{173} Rankin, "First to Proclaim," p. 3.
It should be kept in mind that these routes were in no way fixed or stable; they shifted as the needs of the moment shifted. As can be seen in Appendix A, there was an alternate route that could be taken out of Ripley, going instead through the Negro settlement in Brown County. There were cross lines as well, such as those from Buford to New Market and from Lynchburg to Hillsboro in Highland County. In other words, the line originating in Ripley could take a fugitive to Greenfield, where Samuel Crothers was active, as easily as it could take him to Clinton County. The route chosen at any one time was dependent solely upon the conductor, whose responsibility it was to insure the runaway's safe passage.

The second main trunk line through the Chillicothe Presbytery was located to the west of the Ripley route. Its beginning point was usually somewhere around the river town of Manchester in Adams County. From there it shot north through West Union, where Rev. John P. Van Dyke was a conductor, and on up into Highland County. Just inside the Highland County line the route split, the west fork heading off through New Petersburg and Greenfield. Samuel Crother's territory, continuing on to Bloomingburg in Fayette County, where William Dickey was a leading supporter. The eastern fork crossed into Cynthiana in Pike County and continued in a northeasternly direction into Bourneville in Ross County where it cut back sharply to the west and the
town of South Salem. From South Salem, the home of Hugh Fullerton, a number of lines were available, both to the east and to the west, but eventually the fugitives would be carried through Washington Court House and from there to Bloomingburg in "Father" Dickey's territory. North of Bloomingburg new lines leading out of the Chillicothe Presbytery took over and continued the job begun in either Adams or Brown County. (See Appendix B)

In addition to this main Adams County route, there was also a feeder line that brought fugitives in from Pike County. It picked up slaves around Waverly and took them across the border into Ross County and the town of Chillicothe. It then turned sharply to the west and passed through the residence of one Thomas Skillgress. From there it veered to the north and east through Roxabell and Frankfort finally joining, at Washington Court House, the line that went on up to Bloomingburg. (See Appendix B)

During an interview with Wilbur H. Siebert in 1894, another Skillgress, Joseph, provided a list of some of the operators on the lines in question. He said: "There were a number of other workers there- - - - . . ." Among them he listed Dr. Hugh Stewart, William Elliott, George Gillespie, Dr. Gillespie (the uncle of George), Thomas and James Larmour, brothers, Adam Steele, " . . . an old man who did a great deal . . . .," Robert Steele, and Robert Bustick.
And Siebert added, "Joseph Skillgress believes these men were all members of the Presbyterian Church." 174

In the same interview Skillgress named William Eustick, Robert's father, as being a station-keeper on the route; Eustick "... was a white man and Presbyterian, at Bloomingburg." He also named the Rev. J. H. Dickey and Col. James Stewart, of the Presbytery, as conductors along with Eustick. 175 Still another witness of the period claims knowledge of hearing his "... father say he saw Robert Stewart stoned out of town because of his principles." In fact, the whole Stewart family, according to this witness, Dr. Hugh, James, and Robert—all Presbyterians, were extremely active in underground work during those years. 176

Yet another Presbyterian from Ross County deserves brief mention as an anti-slavery advocate. Satterfield Scott, originally from Pennsylvania, was "... an Abolitionist from way back," and one of the few Chillicothe Presbyterians who ran for political office. According to his son, Robert A., the elder Scott was a candidate for the state senate on the same ticket that had James G. Birney for

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174 Joseph Skillgress, Interview by Wilbur H. Siebert, August 14, 1894, in WHS.
175 Ibid.
176 Dr. G. A. Harmon, letter to Wilbur H. Siebert, August 20, 1894, in WHS.
president in 1840 or 1844 but he received only two votes in all of Chillicothe, "... so unpopular were the principles of the Liberty Party." His major contribution to the Presbytery's anti-slavery reputation, however, was his work on the Underground Railroad in the Ross County area.

Again it should be stressed that the ministers and laymen treated thus far do not comprise the entirety of the Chillicothe Presbytery's anti-slavery membership. They are the only ones who for some reason have left a written record. The others, less active perhaps, but nevertheless significant, will probably never be known. That does not alter the fact of their existence; for even though their names are lost, it is certain that these few ministers and laymen could not have carried on the activities described up to this point without the support of their fellow Presbyterians.

177 Robert A. Scott, "Short Biographical Sketches of Satterfield Scott and Son, of South Salem, Ross County, Ohio," in WHS, Vol. VII.
CHAPTER XI

PRESBYTERY'S ACTIONS

The place of the Chillicothe Presbytery in the Ohio anti-slavery movement obviously cannot be understood apart from the personalities making up that body. But the actions of the group as a whole are also necessary ingredients in the overall picture. The resolutions, petitions, and letters drafted by the Presbytery during the 1820's and 1830's add up to a clear, consistent pattern of abolitionist thought and action. In the General Assembly, in their relations with other presbyteries, indeed, in all their activity as a religious organization, the Chillicothe Presbyterians distinguished themselves as sincere and dedicated anti-slavery advocates.

On the national level, the Presbyterian General Assembly moved from an outright anti-slavery position in 1818 to an increasingly "... hush-hush policy regarding the slavery question ...",178 during the hotter years of the 1830's. In this same period the Chillicothe Presbytery, which was abolitionist even before its official beginning

in 1822, evolved in just the opposite direction. Instead of becoming quieter on the subject, the Chillicothe body increased its public outcry on behalf of the slaves, even as the general climate in the country made it more and more unpopular to do so.

The official position of the General Assembly, changing thus from anti-slavery to pro-slavery, occasioned a loud and sustained opposition from the Presbytery throughout both the 1820's and the 1830's. Even after the 1838 schism, which divided the churches of the Presbytery for some two decades, the ministers and laymen who had fought together before the split continued their abolitionist works, although on different sides of the schism. No matter which national body they belonged to, Old School or New, the Chillicothe members went on working toward their primary goal, a straightforward anti-slavery statement from the national church organization backed up with some kind of enforcing mechanism.

On moral issues such as slavery, one of the most effective ways to concentrate public opinion in the nineteenth century was through the national church assemblies. These were prestigious organizations, which also carried a great deal of influence among the populace. Whether they recognized its efficacy or not, this was precisely the tack taken by the Chillicotheans. They sought to make the Presbyterian national assembly a tool in the anti-slavery
crusade through the passage of resolutions condemning slavery and making slaveholding grounds for punitive actions. From their point of view, however, the years after 1818 saw anything but success in moving the national body toward an anti-slavery policy. Though the 1818 resolution "... put the Presbyterian church on an elevated and honourable position in regards to the evil of slavery," the years following that strongly anti-slavery statement were years of deaf ears and inaction, bitter medicine to the Chillicothe Presbyterians. They tried to effect change through what they considered to be the most efficient and meaningful ways, but the pro-slavery forces staved off their attempts until finally the Presbyterian Church split for a second time in the 1850's, this time along North-South lines.

The first official anti-slavery action that appears in the records of the Chillicothe Presbytery was an unassuming, businesslike entry of a motion that appropriated ten dollars for the purchase of one hundred copies of a "... pamphlet from Dyer Burgess on the subject of slavery..." The members were to attempt reselling the pamphlet at twelve and one-half cents per copy, the proceeds being returned to the Presbytery. Obviously, this does not

mean that there was no anti-slavery activity prior to 1827. The careers of such men as Rankin, Dickey, Burgess, and Crothers show that there clearly was action before this, but not on the presbytery level. 1827 simply marks the first time that the relatively young presbytery went on record as taking an action in opposition to the "peculiar institution."

The following March, 1828, saw the session of the presbytery take under consideration a question that would become the issue upon which the body would base its anti-slavery arguments in years to come.

The Stated Clerk laid on the table a printed memorial to the next General Assembly, by the Synod of Indiana, on the subject of Slavery, which read: The Presbytery referred the following question to the next General Assembly, viz.--is the man who buys or sells or holds a slave, for the sake of gain, a partaker in guilt with the man-stealer, and may such a one be admitted to, or continued in the communion of the Presbyterian Church? 181

In September of 1829, just two years after its first anti-slavery action, the Chillicothe Presbytery unanimously passed an answer to that question: "Resolved, that the buying, selling, or holding of a slave for the sake of gain is a heinous sin and scandal, and requires the cognizance of the judicatories of the church." At the same time, the Reverends Gilliland and Crothers were appointed to prepare

181 Ibid., p. 283.
a pastoral letter on this subject to the churches under
the presbytery's care and report back at the spring
meeting. This unflinching resolution said it all.
Down to the 1838 split this would be the position of the
presbytery; even after the schism the Chillicotheans in
both schools stuck to this article of their belief. They
were excluding slaveholders from their churches, and they
demanded the same from all Presbyterians in the United
States. In further resolutions, in letters, in petitions
and memorials to the General Assembly, in any way they
saw fit, the Presbyterians of Chillicothe restated and
re-emphasized this basic position time and again. The
failure of the General Assembly to act on the question of
slavery in the church certainly cannot be attributed to
the presbytery's lack of effort in advocating such action.

Beyond continued allocation of money for the publica-
tion of anti-slavery pamphlets, the next notable action
of the presbytery appears in 1834, regarding the education
of Blacks in the area. The Chillicotheans were evidently
not content merely with passing resolutions and sending
memorials to the national organization. The condition of
the free Blacks took up their time and energy as well:

On application made in behalf of the people of
color, in Brown county, Presbytery, Resolved to
establish a school or schools among them, and

182 Ibid., p. 283.
Messrs. Burgess, Rutherford, and William Keys were appointed a committee to devise a plan for raising the necessary funds. Unfortunately no evidence was found as to whether the funds were ever raised or the school started. The intent on the part of the representatives at the session, nevertheless, is evident. The members of the presbytery felt it their duty to help in the elevation of the ex-slave to a respectable position in the society. This can be further seen in the same session's release of J. H. Dickey for one month to work among the Blacks of Brown and Highland counties. Slaves had to be more than freed for the Presbyterians of this area to be satisfied; they also had to be made a part of the society to which they had been brought hundreds of years before.

1834 was a busy year in the presbytery's anti-slavery history. That year also saw a memorial on the "... subject of slavery..." adopted and ordered sent to the next General Assembly. The content of the memorial is not available, but it presumably restated the 1829 position, as did most of the presbytery's memorials to the national body. In addition to that memorial, the autumn session of the body ordered an answer to the church document known

184 Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 148.
185 Ibid., p. 147.
as the "Act and Testimony" sent to the editors of the Standard Cincinnati Journal and Luminary. The "Act and Testimony" was a document favoring a neutral position on the slavery question, which, as the Chillicothians viewed it, constituted a pro-slavery bias. The letter to the Cincinnati paper advised Presbyterians not to sign or adhere to the tenets of the document, and listed a number of reasons for taking this position. The fifth of these reasons argued against adherence

Because, instead of looking back with sacred joy to our church's love of human rights, we ought in our judgment to mourn her instrumentality in riveting the chains of slavery on millions of her fellow-men, and many of them the little ones committed by the Savior to her care. She retains in her communion ministers and elders, and some hundreds of private members who are making their fortunes by robbing the poor of their liberty and defrauding them of their hire, and hindering them from the discharge of those duties which God requires of all men, and withholding from them the means of salvation; and in defense of this evil work, they are reviving the popish heresy that reading the word of God is neither necessary nor proper. It is questionable whether the advocates of any of the heresies enumerated in Act and Testimony have done so much toward bringing the word of God into disrepute and causing the enemy to blaspheme, as Presbyterians have done in their efforts to make the Bible justify the sin of slaveholding.\footnote{186 Ibid., p. 179.}

It is hard to imagine a more strongly worded statement of anti-slavery thought than that.

The 1834 memorial to the General Assembly having been unheeded by that body, the presbytery presented another in
1835, along with a demand for its acceptance.\textsuperscript{187} That demand, like all the rest, was denied; for 1835 was the same year that the committee was appointed to report on the disposition of the anti-slavery petitions that were piling up before the assembly. As stated earlier, J. H. Dickey of the Chillicothe Presbytery was one of five committee members appointed to consider these petitions. When the committee reported in 1836 it advised no action be taken on the question of slavery; and while Dickey opposed this finding in a minority report, the pro-slavery men had successfully shut off the Chillicothians once again.\textsuperscript{188} This failure to be heard in 1835, coupled with the election of a pro-slavery Southerner as head of the annual gathering made that years General Assembly an overall failure from a Chillicothe perspective.

But the presbytery did not carry on its fight only with the national body. Most likely as an attempt to bypass that unresponsive organization, the session meeting in the fall of 1835 set up a committee "... to prepare a circular on the subject of slavery, to be sent to each of the presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly."\textsuperscript{189}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{188}Welsh, "Rural Presbytery," p. 140.
\textsuperscript{189}Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 214.
\end{footnotes}
The purpose of the letter can be seen in this portion taken from a copy sent to brethren in Mississippi:

Feeling that the cause of Christ is a common cause in which all the members of his body, the Church, wherever found, are more or less interested, we are induced to address you on a subject deeply involving her purity and prosperity. So close and tender are the ties which bind us together, as members of the same Church and children of the same Spirit, that when one member rejoices or suffers, all the other members rejoice and suffer with it. The present time is witness to the saddening truth that vital goodness is greatly declining; division in some degree prevailing; alienation of feeling and affection towards the brethren and but little success attending the means of grace and the efforts of the church for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. 190

This opening appeal to brotherhood and friendship was followed with nine straightforward, strongly anti-slavery resolutions, including those against buying and selling slaves, against claiming the children of slaves, and against advertising for runaways. The resolutions also favored censure of those who commit an abuse of these resolutions and exclusion from communion for the unrepentent. 191

This letter, which is presumably the one sent to all the churches under the General Assembly as called for in the presbytery's 1835 motion, prompted a reply by a Southern

191 Ibid.
clergyman in defense of slavery. The anti-slavery tract
supposedly served to awaken the Rev. James Smylie against
the growing threat of abolitionism, where upon he penned
a widely read reply to the Chillicothe letter. Smylie's
refutation, defending slavery from a Biblical basis, was
typical of the increasing Southern opposition to abolition-
ist encroachments in their affairs. In fact, Smylie's
effort was aimed as much at arousing Southerners against
the perceived threat of emancipationists as it was at
refuting the letter's contents. 192

Smylie's opposition did not cause the Chillicothe
Presbytery to slow its abolitionist pace. Beside numerous
resolutions in addition to the ones already mentioned, the
presbytery continued its aid to the free Blacks. In
November of 1835 the group accepted a committee report on
education of the "... colored people ..." and hired
a certain E. Weed for one year to act as a missionary
"... with special reference to the colored people ..." 193
In that same session, moreover, the members took up the
question of the slave trade in the District of Columbia.
Not surprisingly, they came out strongly opposed to the
practice:

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192 Ibid., p. 128.
193 Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 230.
Resolved, that it be recommended to all churches under our care to subscribe and forward petitions to Congress for the abolition of slavery and of the slave trade as speedily as possible, within the District of Columbia.\textsuperscript{194}

While this type of political action was not the method most used by the presbytery, the petition to the Congress indicates the broad scope of activity employed by the Chillicotheans in their efforts to banish slavery from American society.

The flurry of activity in 1835 was followed by an equally busy 1836. Starting off in January, the presbytery posted a letter, similar to the one in the Mississippi incident, to the Presbytery of Ebenezer, Kentucky. Again the epistle spoke of the " . . . alienation of feelings and affection . . . " that existed in the church. "For all this there is verily a cause and that cause exists in the church." The cause was, of course, slavery, " . . . a sin that loves darkness and cannot endure the light." Once again the nine resolutions that had appeared before were included for the Ebenezer Presbytery's consideration and adoption.\textsuperscript{195} Nor were the Ebenezer, Kentucky, and Mississippi brethren the only presbyteries to receive the letter. On April 5, 1836 the Stated Clerk of the session reported that a copy of the "Circular on Slavery" had been forwarded

\textsuperscript{194}Ibid., p. 231.

\textsuperscript{195}Sweet, Presbyterians, Collection, pp. 841-844.
"... to the several presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly, ..."\footnote{Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 242.}

Also at the April, 1836 meeting of the presbytery the continuing effort toward educating the free Blacks was seen. A committee reported on the building of a school in the Brush Creek settlement, but no information exists as to the progress made in the project.\footnote{Galbraith, Chillicothe, p. 136.} The only thing that is clear regarding these educational ventures is their intent and their consistent appearance.

The record of the presbytery is not as abundant for 1836 as for the preceding year, but the autumn session produced the usual memorial to the General Assembly, this time written by Messrs. Steele, Gage, and William Keys, three laymen.\footnote{Chillicothe Presbytery, p. 255.} At the same time, John P. Van Dyke, J. Forbush, and Dyer Burgess were selected to examine the various letters received from several other presbyteries on the slavery issue and to report on them.\footnote{Ibid., p. 268.} Unfortunately, the report which they were to make at a later date does not appear anywhere in the records.

The fall of 1836 also witnessed the re-emphasis of their belief that action should be taken against the slaveholders in the church. The Chillicothe Presbytery, along
with the Presbyteries of Grand River, Cincinnati in Ohio, and Salem, Indiana, passed resolutions restating their earlier position that slaveholders should be denied communion.200

This same year, it should be remembered, was the one in which the General Assembly under Southern control, rammed through the no-action resolution on the slavery issue. Throughout the entire preceding that year the Southern, pro-slavery members had threatened secession if any action were taken on the abolitionist petitions and memorials. Both sides were adament, and a compromise was needed to prevent a break. Not only slavery was at issue; there were also fundamental disputes over doctrinal matters and the constitution of the body. Compromise, or rather defeat from an abolitionist perspective, was achieved when action on slavery was indefinitely postponed.201 A split was thus narrowly avoided, but the ill feeling engendered, along with the failure to face up to any major questions, insured even more extreme action at the next Assembly.

The years of 1837 and 1838 were unusual ones for Presbyterians everywhere. The Chillicothe Presbytery

200 Howard, Anti-Slavery in Presbyterian Church, pp. 40-41.
continued presenting its memorials and generally agitating against the institution of slavery. But during both of these years all events were overshadowed by the actions resulting from a conservative coup in the 1837 General Assembly. A coalition of Scotch-Irish purists and Southern pro-slavery men was strong enough to push through the excision of four liberal presbyteries, Western Reserve in Ohio, and Geneva, Geneseo, and Utica in New York. The pro-slavery forces favored their exclusion because of this abolitionist sentiment; the Scotch-Irish element voted more for doctrinal reasons. In any event, the deed was done, and the individual Presbyterian Churches throughout the country had to decide which side to support.202

When the dust had settled and the New School and Old School had formed completely separate entities, the members were fairly evenly divided. Of the 232,000 communicants in the country at the time of the division, 126,000 remained with the Old School and 106,000 went with the New School.203

Generally speaking the Old School must be considered more pro-slavery than the New, but there were, of course, exceptions. The Chillicothe Presbytery provides a vivid example. No matter to which body they adhered, the Chillicothe Presbyterians remained solid abolitionists. They


203Reed, Churches of World, p. 259.
chose sides as their consciences dictated, but the fact that Rankin went with the New School and Grothers went with the Old indicates that the anti-slavery forces in both bodies were never silenced.

Why the various ministers of the Chillicothe Presbytery chose the schools they did in the split is not relevant to this study. What is significant is that so long as they worked together as a body (up to 1822 as part of the Washington Presbytery of Kentucky and Ohio; from 1822 to 1838 as the Chillicothe Presbytery) they fought long and hard to rid the country of the repressive system of slavery. After the split they continued their individual efforts, united still in their abolitionism if not in their formal organizational loyalties. Anyway you look at it, however, the Chillicothe Presbytery in the 1820's and 1830's was an exemplary body of abolitionists, who, at least as much as any other ecclesiastical body, led the way in Ohio's contribution to the anti-slavery movement.

They were not rich men, only average in wealth. They were not exceptionally courageous men, only willing to do what they felt was right. They were not brilliant men, only thorough and straightforward in their statements. They had their differences as all men must. But they were as one regarding a single belief; they had an unceasing and uncompromising hatred of slavery. To them it was inhuman and unchristian. Long after their church had fallen around
them, they remained united on this one issue. The system of slaveholding was sinful and opposed to the word of God; as clergymen and as private citizens the Chillicothe Presbyterians felt obligated to fight, in any way they saw fit, to remove that evil—an obligation that was fulfilled by any standard of measurement.

The Wilbur H. Siebert collection in the Ohio Historical Society's Archives provides valuable information, especially concerning the laymen of the Presbytery and the "Underground Railroad." The collection includes interviews, letters, and various other biographical documents concerning many of the Presbyterian conductors. Edward O. Purtee's The Underground Railroad from Southwestern Ohio to Lake Erie, a doctoral dissertation, (The Ohio State University, 1938) also appeared in the collection in its entirety. The numbers of the Presbyterian Historical Almanac and Annual Remembrancer of the Church for both 1863 and 1864 supplied a great deal of biographical information on the ministers of the Presbytery. Moreover, the collection contained the minutes of the founding meeting of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society. In addition, the 1892 address of J. C. Leggett, "Rev. John Rankin," provided worthwhile biographical information.

The major depository of primary source material on the Presbytery is the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio, where the body's records are stored. The minutes of the sessions of the Presbytery, Vols. I and II, provide information concerning the official actions in regards to the anti-slavery issue, such as resolutions, memorials, etc. These records, coupled with Robert C. Galbraith's History of
the Chillicothe Presbytery From Its Organization In 1799 to 1889 (Chillicothe, 1889), comprise a fairly complete yearly picture of the actions taken in session. Galbraith also includes valuable biographical sketches of most of the ministers. On a more specific level, Galbraith also wrote History of Salem Church (South Salem, 1903), which contains facts about Hugh Fullerton's life and career.

Newspapers of the era are scattered and not generally helpful in uncovering biographical information about the Presbytery's members. Two issues did, however, prove noteworthy. The January 30, 1834 Ripley Bee and Times contained an article by R. C. Rankin entitled "Neither Charles Crosby Nor William Lloyd Garrison Were The First To Proclaim Immediate Emancipation," which was helpful not only for John Rankin's career, but for many of the others as well. The September 12, 1926 issue of the Columbus Evening Dispatch also contains an historical article referring mainly to the "Underground Railroad" around Ripley.

Two collections of letters proved extremely useful. The Correspondence of Thomas Ebenezer Thomas, published by his son Alfred A. Thomas (Dayton, 1909) and Gilbert H. Barnes and Dwight L. Dumond, Letters of Theodore Weld, Angelina Grimke Weld, and Sarah Grimke, 1822-1861 (New York, 1934) give a picture of what other abolitionists thought of the Chillicothe group. Thomas also included biographical sketches of many of the ministers.
A number of county histories were valuable in a biographical sense and in discussions of the "Underground Railroad." The most valuable was Carl N. Thompson's Historical Collections of Brown County, Ohio (Ripley, 1969). Others were R. S. Dills, History of Fayette County (Dayton, 1881); History of Ross and Highland Counties, Ohio (Cleveland, 1890); History of Brown County, Ohio (Chicago, 1883); and Byron Williams, History of Clermont and Brown Counties, Ohio (Milford, 1913).

Some contemporary works of the anti-slavery period were also helpful, especially in providing facts about the minister's lives. John Rankin left information about his own life in a typescript autobiography entitled Life of Reverend John Rankin Written by Himself in his Eightieth Year (Ohio Historical Society Library). Andrew Ritchie, The Soldier, The Battle, The Victory (Cincinnati, 1868) also writes of Rankin, with whom he was personally acquainted. Ritchie provides valuable information about Samuel Crothers in another biography, The Life and Writings of Reverend Samuel Crothers, D.D. (Cincinnati, 1857). Two other works were of less worth, but nevertheless significant: Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio (State of Ohio, 1896) and Albert Barnes, The Church and Slavery (Philadelphia, 1857).

One Masters Thesis in particular was of great help in dealing with the life of John Rankin, Paul R. Grim, The
Reverend John Rankin, Early Abolitionist (The Ohio State University, 1935). Laura Mck's thesis at the same university, The Presbyterians in the Anti-Slavery Movement in the United States (1934), also proved useful, but in a broader sense.

Besides the Edward O. Purtee dissertation mentioned above, Victor B. Howard's The Anti-Slavery Movement in the Presbyterian Church (The Ohio State University, 1961) adds some evidence of the Presbytery's role in the movement, although its scope is too broad to detail much about the Chillicothe group.


Two other works were used briefly in the study. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order* (New York, 1967) was used for
its discussion of the "island Communities" concept. Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography (New York, 1887) was useful in obtaining some biographical information about John Rankin.

The tax records of the various counties comprising the Presbytery were useful in forming a general economic outlook of the men of the body. The records were not directly cited, but they show that the ministers were for the most part men of moderate means. Other studies dealing with the Presbytery but not cited are: Frederick Kuhns, The American Home Missionary Society in Relation to the Antislavery Controversy in the Old Northwest (Billings, 1959); William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religions in America (New York, 1930); Irving Kull, "Presbyterian Attitudes Toward Slavery," Church History, Vol. VII, (June, 1938); Gilbert H. Barnes, The Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844 (New York, 1933); Rev. John F. Lyons, "The Attitude of the Presbyterians in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois Toward Slavery, 1825-1861," Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Vol. XI, March, 1921; Robert E. Chaddock, "Ohio Before 1850," Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, Vol. XXXI (New York, 1908); and Bruce C. Staiger, "Abolitionism and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-1838," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XXXVI (December, 1949).